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Human Will in Bondage and Freedom*

By F. E. MAYER

II

THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

“STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal. 5:1). That is the sum and substance of St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians. Christian liberty is Paul’s one and only theme: the glorious liberty which has freed us from the tyrannical bondage under the Law, sin, death, the devil, and the wrath of God. This was also the heart and core of Luther’s theology set forth in his Commentary on Galatians and especially in his treatise *The Liberty of a Christian Man*. The occasion for writing this tract is highly significant. The papal threat of excommunication had reached Wittenberg, October 3, 1520. Luther immediately dispatched a letter to Leo with the plea that the Pope should not heed the flattering counselors who had ill advised him. Since Luther did not wish to come empty-handed to the Pope, he enclosed in the letter a treatise, which, said Luther, is small as far as size is concerned, but which contains a summary of the entire Christian life, points which he had hoped to discuss with his Roman antagonists. *The Liberty of a Christian Man* is Luther’s first treatise in which he sets forth in a systematic and comprehensive form his entire theology. In the opinion of many this is Luther’s most charming literary production. Pastors and laymen should read and reread this tract—and make it their theological confession. Luther’s treatise is the entire Gospel in a nutshell, for it is the confession of a believer whose faith was born out of the fiery trial of spiritual afflictions into the glorious liberty of sonship.

* Part I appeared in the October issue of this journal.

Scripture presents God's redemptive act under various pictures and from various viewpoints. The message of our redemption is such a brilliant light that it is refracted in many beautiful hues. Sometimes it is present as God's reconciliation with man; as Christ's full and complete satisfaction to His heavenly Father for the sins of the world. Such terms as "the vicarious atonement," "expiation and propitiation," "the forgiveness of sins," "the doctrine of justification," "adoption," are familiar terms in Lutheran theology.

Though all these concepts are present in Luther's writings, he frequently views the redemptive work of Christ as a liberation from the tyrants which have cruelly ruled over us. In the exposition of the Second Article in the Large Catechism, Luther states very significantly: "I believe that Jesus Christ has become my Lord." In the Small Catechism we read: "I believe that Jesus Christ *is* my Lord." Since Luther wrote both Catechisms simultaneously, and since the Large Catechism is a commentary on the Small Catechism, the Second Article is to be understood in the light of Luther's question and answer in the Large Catechism. There he answers the question "What does it mean that Christ has become my Lord?" as follows:

He has redeemed me from sin, the devil, death, and all evil; for before I had no Lord nor King, but was captive under the power of the devil, condemned to death, enmeshed in sin and blindness. For when we had been created by God the Father and had received from Him all manner of good, the devil led us into disobedience, sin, death, and all evil, and we fell under the wrath of God and eternal damnation. There was no one to help us except the Son of God, who expelled the tyrants and jailers. Thus Christ Jesus has become the Lord of life, of righteousness, of every blessing, and of salvation, has delivered us from the jaws of hell, made us free, returned us to the grace and favor of God, and has taken us as His own property to govern us by His righteousness in time and eternity. (*Trigl.*, 685, somewhat condensed.)

Luther's confession "Christ is my Lord" is a synopsis of the entire Gospel. This phrase means that Christ has become my Lord and King by conquering all my tyrants, namely, Satan, death, sin, the wrath of God, and that He has done this by His holy, precious

blood, His innocent suffering and death, and His glorious resurrection. This emphasis on the work of Christ as liberation from the tyrants was due to Luther's religious experience. He lived in dread and fear of his sin and the wrath of God, and his highest desire was to be free from these tyrannical powers. It is this point which the Lundsian theologians wish to emphasize. (Aulen, *Christus Victor* and *The Faith of the Christian Church*, pp. 225 ff.) We appreciate the emphasis which this school has given to one facet of Christ's work, though we cannot subscribe to the somewhat one-sided emphasis of their major thesis nor to some of their theological conclusions. After reading a book like *Zwei Tausend Tage in Dachau*, after seeing the Dachau concentration camp with its torture chambers and its gas ovens, after personally meeting many who had lived under the Gestapo or are now behind the "Iron Curtain," one learns to appreciate what liberty really means, and for that reason the work of Christ under the aspect of a liberation from spiritual tyrants has become so significant and meaningful to Luther and his followers.

1. *The Christian Is Totally Free*

"The truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:32, 36.) It is difficult, if not impossible, to define Christian liberty; it must be experienced. The best description of the New Testament concept "liberty" is release from sin (Rom. 6:18-23; John 8:31-36), from the Law (Rom. 7:3 f.; 8:2; Gal. 2:4; 4:21-31; 5:1), and from death (Rom. 6:21 f.; 8:21). (Cp. Schierl, *s. v.* ἐλευθερος in Kittel, *Theol. Wtbuch. z. N.T.*, VI, 493—500.) This freedom so far transcends our understanding that we can describe it only in negative terms, e. g., a liberation from something dreadful. As light appears in its full brilliance when contrasted with darkness, so freedom becomes the more meaningful, the clearer one perceives the bondage from which he has been freed. It is difficult for modern Americans to join Patrick Henry ("Give me liberty or give me death!") because we have not experienced the thralldom of political oppression. Only the Christian, who has experienced the bondage of the spiritual tyrants, can appreciate—at least in a measure—the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom.

8:21). We shall therefore show under (a) that Christ has freed us from our enemies; and under (b) that through faith in Christ the Christian possesses full freedom as a present reality.

a. *Christ has Freed Us from the Law, Death, and the Devil*

Christ has freed us from the Law. To appreciate this glorious truth, we must first understand what it means to be under the Law. According to St. Paul, who more clearly than any other Apostle sets forth the bondage under the Law, it implies three dreadful facts. It denotes, in the first place, to be tyrannized by the Law, for "the Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth" (Rom. 7:6), and "before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed" (Gal. 3:23). Second, the Law can only increase sin, as St. Paul says: "Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? God forbid! But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13). And finally, the Law subjects man to the wrath and the curse of God, "because the Law worketh wrath; for where no Law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15), and: "As many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse; for it is written: Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them" (Gal. 3:10).

Following in the steps of St. Paul, Luther points out again and again that the purpose of the Law is not to make us just and holy, but to reveal sin and to work wrath. The Law does not pay us any compliments. It does not curtsy us as a subject bows to his king in respect. Its office is solely in the area of sin, of wrath, of death, and of eternal damnation. The function of the Law is only to accuse, and to accuse constantly. It always shows God's wrath. It has no other function. This is the express statement of the Lutheran Confessions. In the Apology's article on "Justification and Love," Melancthon uses the phrase *lex semper accusat* (the Law always accuses) again and again (cp. Triglot, 130, 38; 156, 7.40. 83. 136. 149. 164. 174. 198). Luther correctly identifies the Law with the revelation of sin and the wrath of God. The two

are synonymous terms. (Harnack, *Luthers Theologie*, Vol. I, 388.) Luther states that from God's viewpoint the Law is an "office of wrath"; from the sinner's viewpoint it is an "office of conviction." In other words, in the Law God accuses man, and in the Law man's evil conscience confirms God's sentence. Man may try to escape the dominion of the Law, but in his own conscience he is constantly convicted of its authority, its divine jurisdiction and power. Luther states:

Though man refuses to render obedience to the Law, the Law nevertheless tyrannizes man. . . . It is a mighty and unconquerable sovereign over the entire human race and has full authority to exercise its sovereignty. It therefore not only has the highest jurisdiction in the world, but also possesses the most terrifying power in the world. . . . Man may be able to refuse the obedience which the Law demands, but he cannot shut the Law out from his heart and negate or nullify its power over his conscience, because the heart is so constituted that in creation God's holy Law is written into man's heart with its demands and with its inexorable power. (*Ibid.*, 425.)

The Law holds man captive by two chains, neither of which man can break. The Law is always both mandatory and punitive. By its impossible demands and unbearable punishment it exercises its dreadful dominion over the sinner. In Luther's words:

The Law demands a perfect obedience toward God and condemns all who refuse to render this obedience. Now it is evident that no man is able to render such perfect obedience, nevertheless God demands it of us, and for that reason the Law can do no more than to curse all who have not kept every word of the Law. . . . God does not want a portion of our devotion, He wants our obedience in fullest perfection. Throughout our entire life we should be dedicated wholly and entirely to Him. God demands a free, joyous, willing spirit, He demands the heart. In short, God is not satisfied with outward works. The Law demands our love and can be satisfied only with love (*mit Liebe gesaettigt sein*). . . . But here my conscience convicts me. Since I must love God with all my heart and my neighbor as myself, but have not done it, therefore I am condemned, and God says Yea and Amen to this verdict. Who will counsel me in this? The Law says, I know of no counsel for you, I can only demand that you be obedient. . . .

So the Law rests as a heavy yoke upon our neck, it oppresses our shoulders, it drives us, it imposes an unbearable burden, it prods us with a prick. (*Ibid.*, 426—428.)

In summary, to be under the Law, according to Luther, means to be a debtor to the Law, to be a servant of sin, to be subject to death, and to be a captive of Satan. In Luther's words, the sum and the substance of the work of the Law is not to make people holy, but to make them worse, that is, to reveal sin in its true nature in order that such knowledge may humble them, frighten them, pulverize them, in order that they may yearn and long for the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which alone can free them from this dreadful bondage. There is no sweeter message than the simple Catechism truth: Christ has freed me from the demands, the curse, and the dominion of the Law. That is the Gospel in a nutshell.

Liberation from the Law's Threefold Power

1) Christ has freed us from the demands of God's Law. In His Law, God demands perfect obedience of us, summarized in the First Commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." The First Commandment is the sum total of all of God's requirements for us. It is the strand upon which all other Commandments are strung as pearls. In order to understand what the Commandment really means, it is well to hear Luther's wonderful exposition in the Large Catechism. He states:

To have a God means to have something from which we expect all good and to which we take refuge in all distress. To have a God is nothing else than to trust and believe in Him from the whole heart. It is our faith which makes both God and an idol. Whereupon, therefore, we set our heart and put our trust, that is properly our God. Therefore the intent of this Commandment is that our trust in every condition of life must be settled upon the true God alone. Whatever we lack, we must expect from God. Whatever difficulties strike us, we must seek our escape from these only in and from God. God demands of us that we come to Him alone and not for a moment ever trust in anything of our own, our strength, our wisdom, friendship, money, whatever it may be, nor dare we ever for a moment lose our confidence in God and even with the slightest movement of the heart fail to trust Him perfectly and completely.

God's holy Law is not directed to man impersonally. God and man always stand in an "I-Thou" relation. It is quite significant to note that God gave the first man a name. God deals with every man as an individual personality; He never employs the generic designation "N.N." God gave the first man a name by which God distinguishes him from all other men. Each of us is known to God by his name. Every sinner is known by his distinctive characteristic, even as Cain was a "marked" man. Each sinner's fingerprints are registered in divine FBI files, and each one is individually and personally confronted by his failure to meet the demands of God's Law. (W. Elert, *Das Christliche Ethos*, 59 f.) The individual cannot dismiss the universal sentence: "All must die," because this judgment is not a philosophic universal, but an individual and personal reality. Not only the names of the elect are recorded individually in the Book of Life, but also the name of every person whom the Law of God addresses. There is no anonymous person in the sight of God's holy Law. Man has always tried to deny his individual responsibility toward the Law by seeking refuge behind society *en masse*. Like Adam, he seeks to escape the Lord by hiding behind the trees of the garden. But it is impossible for man to deny his personality and individual responsibility in God's sight by shifting the responsibility to his nation and its government or by hiding behind racial characteristics, social environment, and similar impersonal institutions. In its dreadful demands God's Law confronts the individual in his "being-in-responsibility." It is this which makes the Law in its inexorable demands and my personal responsibility such a dreadful tyrant.

It is from this tyranny that Christ has made us free by the perfect obedience of His holy life and innocent death. That is the heart of St. Paul's glorious message in Rom. 5:12-19. The parallelism between the First and the Second Adam is not intended by Paul to show the similarity between Adam and Christ, but rather the great difference. The two resemble each other only inasmuch as both are representative of the entire human race. In all other respects the contrast between the two is as great as the difference between Law and Gospel, death and life, hell and heaven. By his one act of disobedience Adam brought condemnation upon all men. But Christ by His act of obedience has brought

righteousness upon all men. Adam, as mankind's representative, brought God's wrath and death upon all; Christ, as the Second Adam, brought God's love and life upon all. (Cp. A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, 206—229.)

But Christ cannot be our Representative unless He is true God and true man. He was made *under* the Law (Gal. 4:4-5). He was subject to the demands of God's holy Law like everyone of us. And that includes also this, that in meeting these demands, He was opposed by mighty forces to deflect Him from rendering perfect obedience to His heavenly Father. He was tempted in all things like as we (Heb. 2:18; 4:15), not once or twice, but throughout the state of humiliation. But He could not yield to the temptations. Christ not only remained sinless; He was impeccable; He could not sin. He is always true God as well as true man. He who is tempted as truly and genuinely as Adam was, cannot yield to sin. There have always been those theologians who either questioned the validity of this paradox or have attempted to solve it. Some theologians say that Scripture nowhere teaches Christ's impeccability. The fact is that wherever Scripture teaches that Christ is true God, it teaches also that Christ cannot sin. This is evident especially in His debate with His opponents, climaxing in the rhetorical question: "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John 8:46.) The entire context shows that Christ here establishes His divine Messiahship and His eternal Godhead. The challenge to His enemies is really tantamount to the assertion: "I, the eternal Son of God (v. 58), cannot sin." As strenuously as we must maintain the true deity of Christ, so firmly we hold to Christ's impeccability. (Cp. F. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik* II, 77 ff.) Other theologians, especially the kenoticists, say that in His temptation to be drawn away from God, Christ experienced His impotence and learned to rely solely on His Father's divine omnipotence. The Scriptural theologian, however, believes that Christ as true God is above the Law (Matt. 12:8) and yet, for our sakes, He came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3); though in the form of God, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto leath, even the death upon the cross (Phil. 2:8).

Only as God-Man could the "Second Adam" render the obedience whereby the many shall be made righteous. In the personal

union the Second Adam through His righteousness brought freedom from the demands of God's Law. Not for one moment did He fail to love His Father and His fellow men. His entire life is one continuous act of obedience to every demand of the divine Law. In our preaching we probably place greater emphasis on the so-called passive obedience than the active. But we must never forget that this dogmatical distinction is actually antithetical and is necessary to refute the Anselmic error that only the death of Christ has vicarious value, an error which crept into the Lutheran Church and was rejected by the Formula of Concord (Art. III, 4, 9, 15). The terms active and passive obedience are very useful to emphasize that Christ's entire life was an act of obedience to free us from the demands and the punishment of the Law.

Now the Christian can say: "I am a saint; I have kept all of God's Law, because I have appropriated to myself the perfect obedience of the Second Adam." Luther brings this home beautifully in a sermon for St. Thomas Day (John 20:24-31):

The true righteousness which alone avails in the sight of God rests upon foreign works. . . . But what are these foreign works which please God? They are the works of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father has sent from heaven to fulfill the Law perfectly and fully, for He has loved the Lord with the whole heart and soul, and with all His powers, and His neighbor as Himself. In these two things the entire work of Christ can be viewed, namely, that He loved God, did not follow His own will, became man, rendered obedience, and did everything that His heavenly Father asked Him to do; likewise He also loved His fellow man, for all the works which He did upon earth were only for the purpose to show His unselfish love toward His fellow man, such love that He even gave His life for mankind. Since Christ has fully kept the Law, it cannot accuse Him. Now, if the Law comes and accuses you that you have not kept it, then point to Christ Jesus and say: There is the Man; He has kept it in my stead. I cling to Him who in my stead has fulfilled the Law and gratuitously gives me His own perfect obedience to the Law; then the Law can no longer make any demands upon me. . . . As we are guilty because of Adam's transgression, so now we are righteous in the sight of God because of the righteousness which Christ has rendered for us. (St. Louis, Vol. XI, p. 1962 ff.)

When the hellish hawk swoops down upon the sinner standing helplessly exposed to the demands of God's holy Law, the sinner must flee to Christ, and under the wings of His perfect righteousness he will find safety and security. It is indeed a glorious paradox, that we, who failed to meet the demands of God's Law, have in Christ met all the demands, have victoriously withstood all temptations to sin, and find in Christ's righteousness our glorious dress. It is therefore perfectly in order when the Lutheran Confessions condemn most vehemently any and all systems of work-righteousness. Is it not a sacrilege, blasphemy, the height of arrogance, when men place their own, and oftentimes very foolish works (such as monkery, praying the rosary, abstaining from certain things) above the perfect obedience which the Son of God has rendered in our stead? (Cp. especially Melancthon's classic statement in the Apology, XXVII, 25.)

There is no more glorious message than the proclamation of our complete liberation from the tyranny of the Law in its inexorable demands, which Luther summarizes in his treatise *The Liberty of a Christian Man* as follows:

Here a most joyous exchange and conflict takes place. Christ is both God and man, who has never sinned and whose piety is unexcelled, eternal, and almighty. And this Christ bestows upon the believing soul the bridal ring, that is, faith, and thereby the heavenly Bridegroom takes over man's sins as though He Himself had done them. As the bridegroom assumes all the obligations of his bride, so Christ has also done it for His bride, the Church. Therefore all our sins must be devoured and completely done away with. His perfect righteousness is too strong for sin. Thus the soul, through the dowry which the Bridegroom gives His bride, is free from all sins and clothed with the heavenly brightness of the heavenly Bridegroom. Is this not a most wonderful way to set up housekeeping, when the rich and noble and pious Bridegroom, Christ, takes the poor, despised adulteress as His wife and thereby not only frees her from all evil, but decks her out with all the treasures, jewels, and rich garments in His possession? It is therefore now impossible that sins should condemn her, for they have been laid upon Christ, who has devoured them. This is indeed a rich righteousness which the bride has in her Bridegroom. St. Paul says of this: "Thanks be to God, who hath

given us the victory in Christ Jesus," in whom death and sin is devoured, 1 Cor. 15:57, 55. . . . Therefore Christ is truly the righteousness of all men and the fulfilling of all Commandments. Whoever has fulfilled the First Commandment has also fulfilled all other Commandments. (St. Louis, XIX: 994.)

2) Christ has fulfilled all the Law's demands. Thereby He has, secondly, freed us from the punishment which the Law imposes. Nowhere does the punitive character of God's Law become so evident as in the Judge's verdict: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting hell fire." The time when this verdict is pronounced is not a date on the calendar, but an eternal event. It is not a departing as of that moment when God speaks this dreadful sentence, but it is an eternal separation. The Law is a verdict, a judgment which constantly condemns the sinner from the moment of his sinful conception and throughout all eternity. Every word of God, also His judgment in the Law, retains its creative efficacy. Therefore hell is not primarily a place of physical suffering, but the state and condition where God's "Depart!" eternally separates man from God, from life, from hope.

From this curse, Christ has freed us when in our stead He was forsaken by God, when He really and truly experienced for us the full and eternal force of God's judgment "Depart!" We must therefore seek the heart of Christ's Passion not in His physical suffering, as great as that may have been, but in His being forsaken by God. It is just at this point where the personal union is so relevant for our faith. It is the Son of God who is forsaken by God. According to His human nature and according to our standards this dreadful experience was of relatively short duration. But He is—even in this dreadful experience—the eternal Son of God. Our faith does not watch the clock to judge the significance of the Cross, but it looks at the *Person* who is forsaken for us. The Law can now no longer confront us with its dreadful sentence "Depart!" Christ has freed us from its curse and condemnation. That is the second aspect of the glorious liberty from the Law.

Thus Christ has won for us the glorious liberty from the Law by removing its mandatory and punitive character. In the face of the Law with its demands and threats the Christian can sing tri-

umphantly: "Jesus, Thy blood *and* righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress." But this glorious liberty is a reality only because it was gained for us by the God-Man. There can be no message of a glorious freedom without the proclamation of the mystery of Christ's Person. The doctrine of the personal union is not a theological problem or an academic question, but the absolute corollary and the very foundation of Christ's work. The Church will lose her glorious liberty from the Law if she yields in any way to the luring voice of modern kenoticism. This is done by those Lutherans who will not fully subscribe to either Article III or Article VIII of the Formula of Concord. The former article condemns the Anselmic error that Christ had to fulfill the Law for Himself. Modern kenoticism claims that Christ had to keep the Law for Himself and thus denies that He who was put under the Law was *always* also the Lord of the Law. To say that God's demands cannot be fulfilled by another is a mere subterfuge. It is merely a specious argument when the modern kenoticists claim that the mystery of divine forgiveness is denied if God's pardon were contingent upon a sort of *quid pro quo*, if it were viewed as a juridical act, and not as a sovereign and creative act of God. The Lutheran Church must hold fast to its confession in the Formula of Concord, Art. III, that God justifies the sinner solely by imputing to him the "foreign" righteousness of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Modern kenoticism also denies the vicarious Passion of Christ. The argument runs as follows: Christ could not have endured the eternal torments of hell, since eternal punishment presupposes the eternity of sin and of man's rebellion against God; on the Cross, Christ did not pay the future penalty of sin; the significance of Christ's fourth word upon the Cross is this, that Christ was tempted to despair, but overcame that temptation; that He shared with the sinner the dreadful anxiety over sin; the mystery of divine forgiveness is this, that by His creative sovereignty the loving God cancels the punishment. In short, modern kenoticism does not take the personal union seriously and therefore holds that the only way to view Christ's atoning work is that of a warfare, in which the sovereign love of God overcomes, sets aside, and finally conquers His wrath. Christ, so they say, experiences the punitive character of the Law not in our stead, but only in our behalf; not to fulfill

the Law, but to enable the sovereign God to set it aside. (P. Alt-
haus, *Die Christliche Wahrheit*, II, 256—259; cp. also G. Aulen,
The Faith of the Christian Church, 225—237.) This view, how-
ever, does violence to the holiness of God, denies the vicarious
character of Christ's work, and robs the Christian of the certain
hope that Christ has completely and fully freed him from the de-
mands and the threats of the Law. If we would retain our glorious
liberty, we must believe the personal union. That will be our
guarantee that we are free from the Law in its inexorable demands
and unbearable punishment.

3) Being freed from these, we are free from its dominion.
By nature all men have placed themselves under the terrible
servitude of the Law. Man knows no other theology than a the-
ology of the Law. Man is by nature self-centered, egocentric. He
can comprehend only such a theology as centers in himself. His
theology is summarized in *do ut des*, I give, I do good, in order
to be rewarded. The religion of the Law is the highest form of
egocentricity. Even when he seems to worship God, he does so
to make demands upon God for his own sake. Luther brings this
self-centeredness of man into sharp focus in the short treatise
Exposition of the Lord's Prayer Forwards and Backwards (WA 6,
20—22). We pray the Lord's Prayer "forwards," says Luther,
when we start with the First Petition and pray all the petitions
only from the viewpoint that God's glory may be magnified.
But man is always inclined to pray "backwards," starting with the
Seventh Petition. He prays only when he is in trouble; he is con-
cerned with deliverance from all evil only in order to live happily
for himself; and he prays even the first three petitions solely for
himself. Thus he runs through the Lord's Prayer backwards for
himself. (Cp. Watson, *Let God Be God*, p. 39 f.) In short, to
follow the theology of the Law means that man is thinking only
in terms of saving himself and of serving himself. Whoever puts
himself under the dominion of the Law to save and serve himself
will find that the Law is like *sheol*, the place with an insatiable
appetite, which "the more it gets, the more it wants." The Law
is never satisfied, and when a person thinks that he has kept one
Commandment, a dozen others arise demanding observance.

Under the dominion of the Law, man lives in constant fear. He

squirms and turns because he constantly feels that a thousand eyes of the night are watching his every move. Eat not! Drink not! Touch not! The hope of reward and the fear of punishment are the cruel tyrants which determine his every action. All his energies are dissipated to conform to a self-invented pattern of goodness or to the current social standard of behavior. And the harder he tries to keep the Law, the more his conscience condemns him. He is a slave of the Law, subject to fear. That is what it means to be under the dominion, the coercion, the compulsion of the Law. Indeed the Law is a most dreadful tyrant. To free us from this dominion of the Law, Christ was put under the Law. He has brought us true liberty, the freedom to do what pleases God, without any coercion, social pressure, or any other form of compulsion. The Christian is free to do spontaneously whatever is God-pleasing.

This is the threefold glorious liberty of the Law. Brethren, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. He is the end of the Law by abolishing its demands, threats, and dominion. A glorious liberty indeed! "For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the Law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

Liberation from Death and the Devil

Since we have freedom from the tyranny of the Law, the other tyrants have also lost their power. Death and the devil can no longer tyrannize the Christian. The bondage of death is completely destroyed, because the fear of death has been removed. Man fears death not because of the coffin and the grave, nor the decomposition to which his body is subject, but on account of his sins, which the Law of God has revealed and threatens to punish. And thus all mankind, yes, even creation, exists under the dreadful tyranny of the fear of death. And from this Christ has set us free by His death and resurrection. Christ really and truly suffered death in all its dreadful aspects, both temporal and eternal, and by His glorious victory on Easter Sunday Christ swallowed death in victory. Before Easter the world was a dreadful concentration camp and a large cemetery. But all this has been changed, and we are now living in true liberty. From subjects of death, corruption, and constant fear, we have become the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. We are living in the light and

joy of the final manifestation of our glorious liberty. The groaning and travailing of nature, e.g., the trees moaning in the hurricane, the pitiful cry of a helpless animal in the clutches of a predatory beast, must remind us of the dreadful fear of death under which man lives. However, every anxious cry of animate and inanimate creation is also an expression of the hope to be delivered from the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. 8:19 f.) Because Christ has freed us from death, the Christian changes the ancient mariner's song "In the midst of life we are surrounded by death" to read: "In the midst of death we are surrounded by Life" (Luther, Exposition of Psalm 90, St. Louis V: 741).

The devil's kingdom, as Luther frequently points out, consists of sin, death, hell, and God's wrath. Since Christ has destroyed these, the tyrannical power of the devil, our third tyrant, is broken. In a Good Friday Sermon, Luther says:

This text [Gen. 3:15] Christ had to hear again and again [during His Passion]. For His hour had now come to crush the serpent's head, not the serpent which creeps in the grass and devours frogs, but the old serpent, the devil. And this He was to do with His body and life, permitting the devil to overrun Him and to pour his venom and anger upon Him. In this way Christ crushes and pulverizes the devil so that we might have peace and security. . . . True, the devil remains the devil. But his head is demolished. Christ has destroyed his empire of sin, death, and hell and stripped him of all his power.—This text [Gen. 3:15] was constantly before Jesus during the period when the Jews observed Easter [the Passover]. Therefore He said: This is *My* Easter, a holy day of indescribable anguish, suffering, pain, and sorrow. It was indeed a most severe sermon which was preached to Christ during the night and the day of His suffering. But in His suffering He observed the Jewish Easter in a glorious way, for by His agony He destroyed Satan's empire. He need only to speak one word, and the devil's domain of death, sin, and hell is gone. Whoever believes in Christ shall be certain that sin, death, and hell cannot harm him. (St. Louis, XIII: 1861 f.)

True, the devil is still a liar and a murderer, and by his lies he attempts to destroy faith, and by his murders to annihilate love. He has, as Luther states in the Large Catechism, a serpent's head,

for wherever the serpent finds an opening large enough for its head, it can drag its entire body through. Satan is a master of a thousand arts (*Tausendkuenstler*) and knows untold devices to carry out his lying and murdering. The Christian is therefore constantly conscious of the dangers which threaten him. But Satan's power is broken, and Satan knows it. One little word can fell him, such as "Deliver me from evil," which, according to the original, is either masculine or neuter and can therefore be translated either deliver us from evil, or from the *evil one*, that is, the devil. (Cp. Large Catechism, Seventh Petition.)

Luther frequently summarizes our enemies in the one concept of God's wrath and speaks of God's curse and wrath in one breath with the usual triad of tyrants: sin, death, and the devil. This is truly Scriptural and fully in accord with Luther's own experience of the message of the Law. Therefore Luther saw the essence of the Gospel in Christ's victory over, and conquest of, God's wrath. This is undoubtedly the reason why Easter, as Christ's glorious victory, was so predominant in Luther's theology. It is indeed significant that Luther, though he composed many hymns, wrote no Lenten hymns, but concentrated on Easter hymns. His message was "Christ lives." And because Christ lives, he knows that the wrath of God is conquered. It is the concern of the Lundensian Luther renaissance to emphasize this. (Cp. Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, 230—241.) However, in doing this, this school fails to do justice to the full import of the objective character of the Vicarious Atonement. It does not take seriously the wrath of God and the vicarious character of Christ's work in enduring the wrath and curse of God. When they appeal to Luther in support of the theory that divine love is fused with divine wrath, they do not quote the entire context in which Luther seemingly makes such a statement.

The Christian must indeed make much of Easter, but there can be no Easter without Good Friday; there can be no victory for Christ and us without His having succumbed to the curse of God; there can be no love of God in Christ without God's wrath having truly been poured out on Christ. Luther brings this out forcefully in his commentary on Galatians 3:13, where he says in part:

The philosophers have been offended at this word of God and say that Paul could not have honestly meant such an impious statement as that Christ was accursed of God. . . . It must be kept in mind that Paul does not say Christ has become accursed for Himself, but that He has become accursed *for us*. All the prophets have seen that Christ is the worst malefactor, murderer, adulterer, thief, blasphemer, because He is the Sacrifice for the sins of the entire world, of a Paul, of a Peter, of a David. Thus Christ is the worst sinner, not because He has committed the sins Himself, but because the sins have been laid upon His body. . . . In Christ two diametrically opposed factors meet: the sins of all mankind and the highest and only righteousness. In this Person, who is the greatest and only sinner as well as the eternal and unconquerable Righteousness, sin as a mighty god fights against Christ. One of the two must yield and be vanquished when they meet in terrific battle. . . . Likewise the curse and the blessing wrestle with each other. The curse, which is God's wrath over the entire world, lies in conflict with the blessing, which is God's grace and mercy in Christ. The curse wants to destroy the blessing. This it cannot do, because God's blessing is divine. If the blessing in Christ could be vanquished, then God Himself would be conquered. This, of course, is impossible. Therefore Christ's divine power, righteousness, grace, life, destroys the monster of sin, death, and the curse when Christ assumed these in our stead (Col. 2:15). St. Paul shows that these great things have been accomplished by the glorious Person of Christ, who because He is true God, has conquered sin, death, and the wrath of God, hell, and the devil. Therefore you see how important it is to believe the doctrine of the deity of Christ, for only divine power [the deity of Christ] can destroy our enemies. . . . Therefore with deep gratitude we should accept this glorious doctrine that Christ has become a curse for us, that is, a sinner and subject to the wrath of God, has assumed our person and our sin. For if He had not assumed our sin, He, the eternal Righteousness, could not have become a curse for us nor have freed us from God's wrath. He says: As for Me, I require nothing according to My humanity or deity. But I shall empty Myself of My bliss, clothe Myself in human form (*larva*) and become a curse for you. But because He is a divine and eternal Person, death could not hold Him, and He now lives eternally. . . . [Therefore] you do not have Christ if you do not know that He is God and man. You have Christ only when you believe that this

pure and innocent Person has been given to you by faith so that He might become your High Priest and Savior, yes, your Servant. For you He has put aside His innocence and holiness and has put on your person, your sin, death, and the curse, and thus has freed you from the curse. (St. Louis, IX: 367—387.)

The glorious liberty which Christ has won for us by vanquishing the Law, sin, death, the devil, and the wrath of God is comprehended in the one word "peace," the peace of God which passes all understanding. This word denotes the salvation and the deliverance of the total man according to body and soul from the tyrants which held every man in total bondage. And this freedom and the peace of God is ours in and through the Gospel.

b. *The Gospel the Liberating Power*

The Gospel is not a newspaper report; the Gospel does not only tell us about the work of Christ; but the Gospel is in itself the liberating power. The Gospel is truly the power of God unto salvation. Luther therefore correctly states that the Christian soul has nothing in heaven or in earth in which it can live and be free and be a Christian except in the holy Gospel. In this Gospel we hear Christ say: "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me shall live eternally." Or again: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Or again: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by the Word of God which proceeds out of the mouth of God." Therefore we can be certain that the soul can dispense with everything except the Word of God; and, again, without the Word of God the soul is absolutely lost. Where the soul has God's Word, it requires nothing more, for here it has an abundant supply of everything. It has its food, its joy, its peace, its light, its righteousness, its truth, its wisdom, its liberty, and all good in an inexpressible manner. (St. Louis, XIX: 990.)

In the Gospel, God gives us the entire Christ and in Him divine grace, perfect righteousness, peace, and liberty. In Thesis 37 of the Ninety-five Theses, Luther states: "Every Christian, living or dead, shares in all of Christ's and the Church's treasures without a letter of indulgence." In the Smalcald Articles he condemns the three parts of Rome's penance on the ground that the Christian contrition, confession, and satisfaction is never piecemeal (*stücklich*

und bettelisch), but always complete (Part III, Art. III, 36—38). We have Christ fully, entirely, or not at all. And this "entire Christ" and His work is summarized by the Church in teaching Christ's threefold office.

In His Prophetic Office, Christ reveals Him whom no man has seen. He declares to men the gracious will of God. But the revelation of God is only one phase of Christ's Prophetic Office. Every word of God is a creative word, and Christ's revelation is, like all divine words, an almighty and creative activity. In condemning Rome's enforced celibacy, Justus Jonas showed very forcefully that the word: "Be fruitful and multiply" cannot be set aside by a papal edict, for its creative efficacy will remain until the end of time, just as an arrow, through the tension of the bow, flies through the air until it hits its mark (G. Plitt, *Einleitung in die Augustana*, II, 457). Christ's Word is the effectual and creative Word which not only brings a report of freedom; it actually opens the doors of the prison house and gives us freedom. In His Prophetic Office, Christ is speaking as creatively today as when He stood at the grave of Lazarus and called to him: "Come forth!" or when He said to the paralytic: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." This is the burden of the Savior's words: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). In His Prophetic Office, Christ is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). Christ's Word is the quickening voice of the Son of God; it is spirit, and it is life (John 5:24-27, 39; 6:63). Whether this Word is written, as we have it in the Scriptures; or whether it is spoken, as we have it in the sermon, the absolution, and the mutual admonition; or whether it is signed to us, as we have it in the Sacraments, the Word of Christ always locks the prison gates of hell and opens the portals to eternal life. In every instance the prophetic voice of Christ is the power of God to salvation, the almighty power to make us completely free (Eph. 1:17-23). This is brought out beautifully in Holy Baptism (Gal. 3:23-29). St. Paul contrasts the servants of the bondwoman with the children of the free woman. The Law is the prison from which no man can escape of his own ingenuity and cunning. But the Gospel in Holy Baptism is the power of God to set us free from our enemies. For in Baptism we have put

on Christ; and having put on Christ, we are Abraham's seed, children of God, and heirs according to the promise. Holy Baptism not only tells us that God wants us to be His children; it actually makes us children of God and therefore completely free people. In faith we accept Christ as Prophet, and that means that we possess Him and His mighty Word, which has set us completely free from all the tyrants.

We embrace Christ, secondly, in His Priestly Office, which the Church usually views from its propitiatory and intercessory activity. As Priest, Christ has removed the wrath of God, has broken the power of all the tyrants which ruled over us, has conquered Satan and hell. The Old Testament priests sprinkled the altar with the blood of the goats and bullocks and figuratively placed a covering over sins so that God could no longer see them. The expiation of sins and the pronouncement of the absolution was illustrated by the complete disposal of the sacrificial animal. Thus Christ, our High Priest, by His own sacrifice has covered the face of God, who can no longer see our sins and must pronounce us free from all our sins and of the consequences of sin.

As our Priest, Christ still intercedes for us (1 John 2:1-2). He presents, as it were, His holy and innocent suffering and death to His heavenly Father. When we fall into sin and again become subject to our enemies, death and the devil, Christ pleads with His heavenly Father that for His sake He should deliver us from every evil of body and soul, in short, from the Evil One. The Seventh Petition re-echoes, as it were, the Savior's plea before His Father in our behalf. Faith in our great High Priest gives us complete and full victory.

And finally Christ has become our Lord and King. By nature we were under the tyranny of our enemies, but now Christ has established His kingdom, His gracious rulership in our hearts. This is what Luther has in mind when he answers the question: What is the Kingdom of God? as follows:

Nothing else than what we learned in the Creed, that God sent His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the power of the devil, and to bring us to Himself, and to govern us as a King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience, for which end He

has also bestowed His Holy Ghost, who is to bring these things home to us by His holy Word and to illumine and strengthen us in the faith by His power. (*Triglot*, p. 711.)

It is indeed a glorious truth that Christ has become our King, the King of love, of righteousness, and that in complete liberty we can serve Him in holiness and righteousness throughout all eternity. Is there any liberty which can compare with the liberty which the Christian enjoys in Christ Jesus, his Prophet, Priest, and King? What is the liberty which the Americans have brought to Norway, France, and Germany since the last war compared with the glorious liberty which the children of God have in Christ, their Savior?

This liberty is not a future blessing, but a present reality. It is true indeed that we wait for our liberation, but it is equally true that we also possess it now. Luther often speaks of the "already—not yet" of the Christian faith. Luther was deeply rooted in an other-worldly religion. His entire thinking centered in the final goal of the Christian faith: eternal life and salvation. But Luther's theology was truly paradoxical. While his thinking was other-worldly, he was, "with his head in heaven, firmly planted with both feet upon the earth." The Lutheran Christian is constantly filled with joy by virtue of the glorious hope which illuminates every corner and crevice of this universe. The joy which filled Luther's heart at the glorious expectancy manifests itself already in this world.

Frequently our emphasis is on the "not yet." That seems quite natural. All around us we see death, we commit sins daily, we feel the power of the devil, we recognize our own impotence. But we must constantly look upward and keep in mind that even here and now we possess all things. Salvation is not only a future blessing, for to be saved means to be saved here and now. The Christian's motto is: "I rejoice in the Lord alway." His philosophy of life is that of Paul Gerhardt:

Mein Herze geht in Spruengen Und kann nicht traurig sein,
Ist voller Freud' und Singen, Sieht lauter Sonnenschein.
Die Sonne, die mir lachet, Ist mein Herr Jesus Christ;
Das, was mich singen machet, Ist, was im Himmel ist.

(Cp. the translation in *Lutheran Hymnal*, 528:15.)

The unbeliever has no understanding of such a *Weltanschauung*. If he does take life seriously, he can evaluate his life only from the viewpoint of his bondage under the Law. Often this bondage leads to a contempt of the world, manifested in many forms of asceticism. The ascetic frowns upon and usually proscribes every joyful experience and awaits only the day when his spirit will be released from the bondage of this body. Christian liberty, however, is entirely different in its world view. The freed Christian knows that he is a free child of God fully now. True, it does not yet appear what we shall be, not because we are not as yet fully the children of God, but because our glory is hidden and invisible. The world cannot know what we are, and often we Christians, because we still have our old Adam, cannot see and understand the glory that is ours and that shall be revealed. Nevertheless, the future glory of the Christian is his already in this life. In this connection Luther states the following:

Through His birth Christ has the honor and prestige of being born a Priest and King, for He was of royal and priestly ancestry. This is a noble heritage; this Christ shares with us and makes us kings and priests together with Himself, as St. Peter says, "Ye are a royal priesthood." Through faith the Christian is elevated so highly that he is spiritually a lord of all things. Nothing can harm him in his way to heaven. In fact, everything must be subject to him, as St. Paul says: "All things work together for good to the elect, whether it is life or death, sin or piety, evil or good." Whatever we may mention, it is all ours and must serve our eternal salvation, as St. Paul says 1 Corinthians 3. Of course, we do not possess these things empirically and bodily now, for we, too, must die, and no one can escape death; we, too, are subject to many things in this life, but spiritually we are kings and lords, so that even my death and my suffering must serve me. This is indeed a noble heritage which we have when we share in the birth of Christ. Indeed, we are the true and all-powerful nobility, so that we enjoy even now the most precious liberty and the greatest power in the world. (St. Louis, XIX: 997 f.)

The pastor ministers to a congregation composed of priests and kings who possess all things in Christ, who are sitting with Christ in heavenly places and are lords of everything (Eph. 2:4-6). All Christians are blessed with every heavenly blessing in Christ Jesus;

they are heirs of God, and as heirs they possess their eternal bliss now; they now have a reserved place in heaven (1 Pet. 1:4). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for" (ὑπόστασις, Heb. 11:1.) The New Testament readers understood this to mean that faith is like the legal document which shows rightful ownership to a piece of property. The man with a properly notarized deed claims the land described in the deed, whether or not he has ever seen it. So our faith is our deed, the substance, ground, to the heavenly property. And no power can ever dispossess us. All this is vividly portrayed and effectively conveyed to us in the Gospel. Our faith sometimes stumbles at Christ's words on the way to Lazarus' grave: "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Is it really true that the Christian does not die, that he has already gone to life everlasting? We find the answer to this perplexing question in Holy Baptism. In Baptism we were buried together with Christ; we share in Christ His battle with our tyrants, sins, death, the devil. But we also share Christ's glorious victory. We have been quickened with Him and now live before God in righteousness and purity forever. It takes very strong faith to believe this. But the essence and core of the Gospel is that everything that Christ has won for us is ours now through faith. We *now* are the children of God; we are *now* living in the liberty of the sons of God through Christ Jesus. Our faith is truly eschatological now.

2. The Christian, a Totally Free Man, Becomes the Servant of All

Luther's theology, like that of St. Paul, is truly "other-worldly." The desire to depart and to be at home with the Lord is a dominant motif in St. Paul's theology. This is only natural, since everything for our salvation is already finished, and we wait only for the coming of our Lord and Savior. In fact, the purpose of all history is the saving of God's elect (Romans 9-11). The Apostolic message centers in a tremendous urgency and a constant expectancy of the Savior's return, summarized in the conclusion of the New Testament canon: "Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20; cp. 1 Thessalonians). Luther expressed this same expectancy at Smalcald in 1537, when the politicians attempted to fix an agenda for a proposed council. Luther proposed

an agenda with the concluding prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, do Thou Thyself convoke a council, and deliver Thy servants by Thy glorious advent."

Luther viewed life as a pilgrimage. Each evening the pilgrim stops at the hotel, uses its facilities without attaching his heart to them, and continues his journey on the following day. This world view, however, does not consider life as being spent on two levels separated by a great chasm, nor does it teach that life is only the testing ground for the future life. That would be a Law theology, for its basic premise is that man must seek to ascend to God by his own efforts. Such a two-level world view places man in this life on the lower level, where, by self-appointed works and divine testing, man hopes to prepare himself for entry into the upper-level world. This type of theology prompts people to enter religious orders. The Trappist Order, for example, teaches that by self-negation its members can approach this upper level already in this life. Such practices as meditation upon the vanity of life, complete isolation from society, abstinence from all normal activities, even conversation, are viewed as means to transcend from the mundane to the celestial plane. However, every form of self-negation done with the hope of a reward is not self-negation at all, not the Christian denial, not the taking of the cross. It is not denial, but egocentricity when a person "denies" himself something to obtain a reward for it. That is indeed a theology of the Law and leads to a morbid world view. The Gospel theology teaches that God is essentially a *Giver*. Luther compares God to a fountain. The more water it gushes forth, the richer and the purer the supply becomes. True to His name, God is constantly giving. The believer can do nothing but receive. Being under the Gospel, the Christian receives much — everything! Therefore faith is indeed the *Nehmehand*, which is always begging. Luther compares the Christian to a peasant woman with a large apron. The larger the apron, the greater the supply she can carry home. And so faith must always come with a tremendously large apron, the larger the more pleasing to God. In another instance Luther uses the following illustration: A king promises a beggar to give him anything that he may request. Is it not an insult to the king if the beggar

then would ask for a bowl of soup? Likewise we would insult God if we do not bring "large petitions" to God.

But some people say: "If man is totally free and not expected to do anything, if we are free from the burdensome commandments of the Church, then the Christian religion indeed is an easy religion. If faith is everything and there is nothing for us to do, then 'let us eat and drink and be merry.'" And so the charge has always been made by all Law theologians that Lutheran theology, a theology of the Gospel, has taken the seriousness out of religion and has opened the floodgates to a life of license. It is true indeed that the religion of the Gospel has freed us from a tremendous bondage, from an impossible obligation. But since we can do nothing for our salvation, we are now no longer bound to the impossible yoke whereby we had hoped to pull ourselves into heaven. The Gospel has freed and released our powers for a new activity. In every form of Law religion man dissipates all his strength in an entirely false direction and a futile attempt. Under the Law we wasted our energy on absolutely useless and vain undertakings. Under the Gospel we are free to devote our entire strength to serve God and our fellow men. Luther summarizes this paradox as follows: "The Christian, a totally free man, becomes the willing servant of all and is subject to everyone." Free from every obligation, the Christian is cheerfully engaged in many activities. According to Luther, these activities center in two areas: (a) in the works toward oneself, and (b) in the works toward one's fellow man.

a. According to the new man the Christian is perfect. He will now see to it that his total person, that is, body and soul, constantly pleases God. This means, according to Rom. 6:6, 12 and Gal. 5:24, that we must bring our body into conformity with the high and noble purpose for which the total person has been redeemed. St. Paul keeps his body in subjection (1 Cor. 9:27). Luther, too, advocates an ascetic life. However, it must be kept in mind that Luther's asceticism is entirely different from the one which is commonly in vogue. Many people seem to believe that when St. Paul speaks of the body, he means the fleshly and corporeal part of man. They falsely hold that the body is the seat of sin and, as a result,

maintain that by subduing the body with actual chastisements, such as fasting, wakings, celibacy, or even torture, they weaken the body and eradicate sin. This dualistic view of man leads to the Neoplatonic error that by weakening the body the better part of man, the soul, can more easily ascend to God. However, when St. Paul speaks of the body, he has in mind the total person, with all the faculties of intellect, will, and emotions, in so far as the *total person is still under sin*. True, God places chastisements upon us, such as sickness, afflictions, loss of property, and even death, to keep our body in subjection. But these are not self-imposed chastisements, but come from the loving hand of God, because the Christian still has his old Adam. The Christian himself will constantly crucify his flesh with all the sins and evil lusts. He will be temperate and moderate in all things, such as eating, drinking, luxuries. However, the best way to keep the body in subjection is not by abstaining from certain things, but rather by doing something positive and constructive. This was St. Paul's motto when he said to the Christians: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, . . . which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). The Christian life does not consist in "don'ts," but in "do's," in activity. Luther comments on this as follows:

God gave Adam something to do in Paradise, not that he should thereby become holy, for he was already holy, but God commanded him to be a farmer lest he become idle. God gave him pleasant works to do so that he would be occupied and his body be protected. (St. L. XIX, 1002.)

The Christian's total person is redeemed, that is, he is saved according to body and soul. Christ became man and took on our flesh to redeem not only our souls, but to redeem us according to body *and* soul as total personalities. Our bodies as well as our souls are temples of the Holy Spirit. The total person performs good works and places all his faculties of body and mind into the service of God. This is symbolized and effected in Holy Baptism. There is, as Luther points out, a specific purpose why the Savior combines the Word with the water. Luther states:

The reason why we use the Word and water in Baptism is that the body, which can apprehend nothing but the water, is sprinkled and, in addition, the Word is spoken for the soul to apprehend;

now, since both the water and the Word are one Baptism, therefore body and soul must be saved and live forever: the soul through the Word, which it believes, and the body, because it is united with the soul and also apprehends Baptism as it is able to apprehend it. (Large Catechism.)

This is the truly ascetic life. However, it is not controlled by a codified system of laws. The Christian has no set standard of rules and regulations according to which he lives, but in every moment, in every situation, there is before him the highest of all standards: *to be active in pleasing God*. Luther expresses it as follows:

Good works never made a pious person, but a pious person performs good works. . . . The Christian is sufficiently pious through his faith (*er ist satt und selig durch seinen Glauben*), which has appropriated Christ and His Person, and therefore there is no work which is necessary to salvation. The Christian is free from all laws. In this absolute liberty he does everything without the hope of reward, never for selfish purposes, for he is blessed in his faith for Christ's sake. This makes labor so highly noble, in fact, the lowest menial labor, such as washing diapers, becomes an activity prompted by love to God. Whatever the Christian does, in high or low position of life, he does it to the glory of God and puts his body into the service of God and his fellow man. (St. L. XIX, 1003 f.)

b. Lutheran theology has often been charged with being totally indifferent to its social responsibilities. The unfortunate lack of social consciousness in many Lutheran quarters does not originate in Luther's theology. Luther had no patience whatsoever with a world view which compelled men to withdraw from society and to enter into a monastery. It was Luther's hope to re-establish the principles of the Apostolic Church, where all things were held in common and where the Gentiles could not but exclaim: "See how these Christians love one another!" The Christian cannot be without works toward his fellow man. In the Christian life, faith is constantly active and concerned only with serving and benefiting other people. Such activity has no other standard than the brother's need. In our fellowship with the Spirit (*Κοινωνία*) we possess everything, we lack nothing for Christ's sake. We now manifest our love to Christ in this, that we no longer look to our welfare,

but follow Christ's example. Though He was in the form of God and possessed everything, He freely gave up everything in order to serve us with His perfect obedience, yes, with His perfect obedience upon the Cross (Phil. 2:5-8). In a sermon on Phil. 2:5-6 Luther says:

Christ did all this, not because we were worthy of it, but in order to be obedient to His Father. Here St. Paul opens with one word heaven itself and permits us to look into the very abyss of divine majesty and to behold the marvelous will and grace of God's fatherly heart. Thus we can experience how it has pleased God from eternity that His Son should do everything for us. Whose heart does not melt with joy at beholding this? Who should not praise, live, and thank God and again become the servant of all, yes, willingly become less than nothing, when he sees that God has so richly and abundantly poured out His love upon us? (St. L. XII, 476.)

In his treatise *The Liberty of a Christian Man*, Luther points out that the Christian has everything through faith. Therefore it must follow with cold logic that he needs nothing more whatsoever. He states:

What else can I do to such a kind Father, who has blessed me superabundantly, than to give Him freely, joyously, without any hope of reward, whatsoever pleases Him? Yes, I must also become a "Christian," a true Christian, toward my neighbor, even as Christ has become "Christ" for me. Since in faith I have everything through Christ, the only thing I can do is to serve my neighbor in those things that are necessary and beneficial to him. In this way love to God springs out of faith, and out of my love there flows a free, willing, joyous desire to help my neighbor. Just as my neighbor is in need and requires my help, so we also were in need before God and required His grace. And, again, as God has helped us through Christ, without our merit, so we also must serve our neighbor with our body and works. Let us place everything into the service of our neighbor: our talents, our time, our money, our love. (St. L. XIX, 1008.)

We must always come to the aid of our fellow man in his physical need; support our government with our prayers and our taxes; our fellow Christians in truly ecumenical spirit. Luther comments as follows:

If you want to do really good works, give to charity, to the Church, to your neighbor, then do it without any hope of reward, but only with that one thought in mind that other people may be benefited by it; then you are a true Christian. What will you do with your property and your good works which remain over and above those that you need to take care of your own body, since you have more than enough in your faith, in which God has given you all things? Thus God's gifts are to flow from one to another and become truly common property, so that each one takes care of his neighbor as though it were he himself. . . . I must be willing to put my faith and my righteousness at the service of my neighbor in order to cover his sin. Yes, I must take his sins and shortcomings upon myself as though they really were mine, even as Christ has done for me. This is indeed the nature of love, that it never—under no conditions—seeks its own, but always that of the fellow man. (*Ibid.*, 1010 f.)

But does this mean that we may not use our earthly possessions, such as our scientific knowledge, our cultural heritage, our material wealth? All of us have various earthly goods which have been given to us for our use and enjoyment. Is it right to keep these, or should we give everything away? Luther has the right answer to this problem when he states that all these material and earthly blessings are gifts of God for all men, including also the unbelievers. The Bible gives us records of rich and influential Christians, and nowhere does it prescribe that the rich should give away everything. St. Paul has very specific directions for the rich, which do not include the obligation to give away all their money. The entire universe, with the beauty and glory of nature, the wonderful endowments of man manifest in the arts and sciences, yes, even the leisure time for man's enjoyment, are God's gifts to man, which he is to use and to enjoy; however, we should always be mindful of St. Paul's injunction that all of us are to possess whatever gifts we have as though we possessed them not. (Cp. Heinz Bluhm, "Das Diesseits in Luthers 'Von der Freiheit,'" etc., *Monatshefte für den Deutschen Unterricht*, Febr. 1951, 93—107.) As the cobbler uses his tools and, after the pair of shoes has been completed, lays aside his awl and needle, the Christian constantly keeps in mind that the gifts of this world are given only for a transitory and ancillary purpose. Our secular gifts must always remain be-

neath the spiritual gift. As citizens of the secular realm, we shall use them. In the spiritual realm, Luther gives us the following motto:

Through faith the Christian ascends above himself unto God. But from God he again descends beneath himself through love and thus ever remains in God and in divine love. (*Ibid.*, 1011.)

3. *Freedom and Bondage in the Christian Life*

a. As long as the Christian is in this world, he is involved in an invisible conflict.* The Christian is constantly in a state of tensions. Luther describes this conflict as follows: The inner man is at one with God, is always joyful for Christ's sake, who has done so much for him, and finds his full delight in doing in free love what pleases God. But in his flesh he finds a contrary will which would serve the world and seek only what pleases itself. Faith cannot endure this selfishness of the old man and therefore seeks to restrain the old will, as St. Paul says Rom. 7:22, 23; 1 Cor. 9:27; Gal. 5:24. Thus the Christian is both free and bound, he is *iustus et simul peccator*, and he is constantly engaged in a life-and-death struggle.

Scripture describes this conflict in various ways. St. Paul, for example, usually speaks of the Christian as consisting of flesh and spirit and, at first glance, describes the Christian as a dual or "split" personality with two opposing wills. St. Paul seems to think of the Christian as though he were two personalities at war with each other. However, he does this to bring out the reality of the conflict. We must be careful lest we misunderstand St. Paul as though he followed the psychology of the Greek philosophers, the Roman Catholic Church, and many of the present cults. When Paul speaks of two opposing wills (Rom. 7:17-23), he does not have in mind that the Christian is a dualistic personality, the "flesh" living in one compartment and the "spirit" in another. For him the word "flesh" denotes the total person, with all the faculties of body and mind, in the service of sin. The "spirit" is for St. Paul the total person who serves God with a freed will. Christ did not come to

* In his *Das christliche Ethos* W. Elert devotes an entire chapter to "*Der unsichtbare Streit*," pp. 370-431. Some of the topics which he discusses are: "The Christian on Two Paths," "The Totality of Human Personality," "The Third Use of the Law."

redeem only our souls, but our bodies as well, in fact, the entire person, and for that reason the Redeemer did take on not only our human soul, but also our flesh, to redeem our bodies as well as our souls and to make His believers the temple of the Holy Spirit according to both body and soul.

There is a constant conflict between the Christian's new man and his old man. The entire person, both the old and the new man, always participates in every action of the Christian. It is not as though a Christian were for a time living according to the new man and then for a time living according to the old man. In every God-pleasing work the Christian's old man is constantly interfering with what the Christian would do according to his new nature. Take prayer as an example: According to the new man the Christian enters into blessed communion with God and shuts out all selfish and foreign thoughts. But in the midst of prayer the Christian according to his old man is assailed by selfish and even sinful thoughts, so that the Lord's Prayer becomes the greatest martyr at the hand of Christians. For that reason the Christian must confess with St. Paul: "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7:18-19.)

Scripture also describes this "invisible conflict" by presenting the Christian as being on two ways, the narrow and the broad way, the way of believers and the way of unbelievers, the one leading to eternal life and the other to eternal destruction. They run in diametrically opposite directions. In the Christian's experience, however, these two ways often seem to run parallel. They are so close together that oftentimes only a hair's breadth separates them. Our modern highways with their central line seem to be an exact analogy, for the line is intended to keep traffic moving in opposite directions, but fails to do so with fatal results.

In sorrow and contrition the Christian has gone through the narrows of a mountain pass; he is now on the way which is Christ. But this way continues to be very narrow, in fact, so narrow that even one self-righteous deed will block any progress. This way is only wide enough to permit the Christian to take no more than his faith in Christ Jesus. In the Christian's life the other way—

the highway of the works of the Law — runs parallel to this narrow way. It looks very inviting, the scenery seems to be more beautiful, and he is constantly tempted to take this highway. It appeals to our natural inclination to return to the bondage of the Law. A legalistic theology is always popular.

Christians have gone through the narrows, but they are not yet at the goal. Daily, hourly, the believer must go through the narrows again. This does not appeal to his old Adam. The danger which confronts the Christian is that he so often would like to go on the broad way, which appears to be so much more charming. Thus only too frequently he attempts to walk on both highways: trusting in Christ and serving Him alone and at the same time boasting of his good works. Is this the reason why the Christian is so often assailed by doubts and the terrors of conscience? Does the Christian question the assurance of his salvation or become carnally secure because he has entered the broad way of the Law in his attempt to become good in the sight of God, forgetting completely that the Law has only one function, namely, to accuse man? The temptation to straddle the narrow line which separates the two highways constantly confronts the Christian, and he is always in the state of tensions. But thank God for these tensions, for as Luther points out: the greatest temptation for the Christian is not to have any temptations and to feel carnally secure, to forget God, and to walk the broad way without realizing it. The inner conflict finally should have but one purpose, namely, to keep the Christian in the narrow way by constant watchfulness and diligent use of the means of grace.

Scripture furthermore presents the Christian as living in two eras: the old age and the new age. The old age is the dispensation of the Law. This age has its own princes (1 Cor. 2:6), even its own god who blinds man (2 Cor. 4:4), and its own system of theology, the doctrine of salvation by works. This is indeed an evil age (Gal. 1:4). The Gospel, however, has ushered in a new age; it proclaims the new year, the year of liberty; the old things are passed away, all things have become new. According to the new man the Christian has already tasted the powers of this new era (Heb. 6:5). Christians are sitting with Christ in heavenly places and have the full bliss of the new age (Eph. 2:6).

But like the Galatians, the Christian often looks with yearning eyes to the old age. He wants to observe certain rules and regulations whereby he hopes to work out his salvation. Luther says on this point:

Every Christian is divided between two ages (*Zeiten*). Inasmuch as he is flesh, he is under the Law; inasmuch as he is spirit, he is under the Gospel. During the age of the Law, greed, jealousy, and pride cling to his flesh; according to the old man he is ignorant of God, impatient, always murmuring, always angry with God. If you live only according to the flesh, then you are always under the dispensation of the Law. But this period must be shortened; otherwise no one could be saved. The age of the Law is not eternal; it will end. The age of the Gospel, however, is eternal, for Christ died once and now lives eternally, and so also the period of the Gospel will be eternal. (St. L. IX, 452 f.)

Thus the Christian constantly finds himself living in two dispensations, and this accounts for the tremendous tensions and the terrific inner conflict of every Christian.

And, finally, the Christian life is described as being under two doctrines: the Law and the Gospel. According to the new man he is just, absolved from all sins, and desirous to do only holy works, he is *iustus*; but according to the old man he is always a sinner and wants to do only what is displeasing to God and is therefore constantly under judgment, he is *simul peccator*.

According to the new man the words of St. Paul apply: "The Law is not made for a righteous man" (1 Tim. 1:9). In a sermon on this text Luther says:

Through faith the Christian does everything which the Law demands. He has the Holy Spirit, who has set his heart aglow with love for everything that is good. Therefore you cannot command a Christian man to be good. That would be as foolish as to order a man to be a man and a woman to be a woman, for it is their very nature to be that and nothing else. If you therefore attempt to command a Christian to be good, you would be a fool, for you would order him to do something which is already done; and God is no fool, to demand payment for that which is already paid. (*Ibid.*, 880.)

But according to the old man the Christian is also under the Law; he is completely sold under sin, and therefore the Law with

its demands and accusations constantly stands before him. The dogmatic term "third use of the Law" has sometimes been used as a guise to cover a legalistic theology, as though the Law were some sort of a helpmeet for salvation. The typical legalist actually makes the third use of the Law its primary function. (Cp. "The Function of the Law in Christian Preaching" in *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1950, 123—129.) The Law must indeed be preached to the Christian, who because of his old Adam sometimes has foolish notions as to what are good works, invents his own works, and esteems these much higher than the good works which God has prescribed. Because of the old Adam, who is identical with the world, the Law must be preached to the Christian as a curb, as a mirror, and as a rule. But in this threefold function the Law remains plaintiff and judge (cp. Formula of Concord, Art. VI, pars. 18—24). *Lex semper accusat*.

In his every activity the Christian is under both the Law and the Gospel. This makes Christian preaching and Christian living so extremely difficult at times. The Christian preacher does not preach to two persons, but to the one personality under two aspects. Therefore he sometimes finds it difficult to apply each doctrine properly in the cure of souls. In his daily living the Christian encounters tensions because he is under two doctrines. When he looks at himself, he sees his sin, the accusing finger of the Law, and God's wrath. But when he sees himself in the light in which God looks at him, there is nothing but grace.

b. And so the terrible and relentless conflict goes on. The Christian's heart is a constant battleground, and on this battle front the old man and his allies are arrayed in battle order against the Christian according to the new man, whose weapons are the sword of the Spirit, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and prayer. Sometimes the Christian wins glorious victories; in fact, every good work which the Christian does in faith for Christ's sake is a victory such as has never been won on any battlefield of this world. However, the Christian also goes down in defeat because he fails to use his battle equipment and surrenders to the enemy within himself. But by God's grace, in losing a battle, the Christian does not lose the war!

Conscious of the terrific warfare going on within himself, the

Christian cries with Paul: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24.) But, thank God, the flesh, the old age, the broad way, the doctrine of the Law, will finally cease. We long for that time now and look for the final victory when the Holy Spirit will quicken our mortal bodies and transform them so that they will be like the body of our glorified Savior. It is indeed very appropriate that the ancient Church placed the doctrine of the resurrection of the body into the Third Article of our Creed and thereby indicated that in the Christian's bodily resurrection the Holy Spirit will bring His work of sanctification to its glorious culmination. The warfare is of course ended when our souls enter bliss in the moment of death. Therefore the Christian longs for his death, not because he has become battle-weary, not because he is looking for respite from the continuous inner conflict. Such a theology is anti-Scriptural, is the height of egocentricity, and is akin to the Hinduistic Nirvana theory. Beyond death the Christian sees the glorious resurrection of his body. He joyfully awaits this moment because it will usher in that endless period in which the Christian according to body and soul will live under Christ in perfect, eternal, and unalloyed righteousness. Free from every form of bondage and translated into the perfect liberty of the children of God, the perfected saints will serve the Triune God in righteousness and holiness in the new age forever and ever.

St. Louis, Mo.

A Remedy for Modern Chaos— Luther's Concept of Our Calling

By O. C. RUPPRECHT

I. THE CHAOS OF THE MODERN AGE

IT is one of the ironies of history that modern American civilization, noted for educational activity unequaled in extent, if not in quality, in any previous era, has arrived at a point of development notable for disillusionment, bewilderment, confusion, anxiety, fear, terror, and despair, which are also unparalleled, if not intensively then certainly extensively, in any former epoch.

"Our age," says Dr. Ludwig Lewisohn, "is one of unexampled moral deterioration, turbulent, confused, devoid of hope and order."¹ *The Waste Land*, by T. S. Eliot (1922), *The Age of Anxiety*, by W. H. Auden (1947), *The Age of Terror*, by Leslie Paul (1951) — these titles possess more than literary significance. They are descriptive of our time. Critics agree that these titles are proper labels of the modern era and that the works themselves accurately reflect the current moods of "vacillation, weakness, sordidness, and despair."²

To see more clearly the preciousness of Luther's legacy to our generation, it will be important to engage in a brief survey of the time in which we live.

Several months ago thousands of thinking people throughout the nation were shocked by an article entitled: "The Repudiation of Man." Written by Norman Cousins, editor-in-chief of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, the article carried the dateline August 6, 1960. It was an attempt at imagining and portraying

¹ Ludwig Lewisohn, *The Man of Letters and American Culture* (Chap Book of the College English Association, May, 1949), p. 11.

² Woods, Watt, and Anderson, eds., *The Literature of England* (New York: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1948), Vol. II, p. 1032. The title for the chapter is "The Struggle on the Darkling Plain." — *This Generation*, an anthology of modern literature, ed. by Anderson and Walton (N. Y.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1949), has the following significant chapter headings: "Carrying on the Tradition," "The War and the Waste Landers," "Chorus for Survival," "The Age of Anxiety."

how our world, devastated by atomic destruction, might appear, and might be described by a writer, approximately ten years from now. The following statements introduced the article:

Over everyone and everything today there is the giant shadow of a single word: "Why?" You see it in the taut and anxious faces of people, young and old; it jumps out at you from the spilled stones of tumbled towers and from the dismembered parts of once-great bridges. Why did it happen? Why is it that suddenly there should be so little where there was once so much? Why did man sanction these massive hammer blows against his own society and indeed against the conditions of his own existence?³

The article evoked a flood of response. Typical of the numerous and vigorous replies is the statement of a correspondent who declared: "The Repudiation of Man' is a startling picture of *mass insanity*."

We need to remember that the discussion of these gruesome and frightening prospects was neither provided nor provoked by writers who cater to the Superman readers. Nothing was farther from the purpose of the editors, or of those who replied, than to revel in the sensationalism of fantastic predictions. The views expressed are the solemn opinions of sober men and women, leading thinkers of our age, who, as another writer recently stated, are frightened and alarmed "in a world which daily plunges itself deeper into a chaotic abyss."

At the beginning of 1950 a well-known writer stated gloomily:

Time has written a period in human annals, but *no new certainty in human affairs*. The decade ushered in by war has passed, but the *dilemmas, indirections, and complexities* of the era still *confound the present and confuse the future. Fear rides in men's hearts*.⁴

Many of our contemporaries, says another writer, are "directionless men, eyes dead in their sockets, walking directionless upon the cold crust of a cold earth."⁵

³ *The Saturday Review of Literature*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 31 (August 5, 1950), p. 7.

⁴ *SRL*, XXXIII, 1 (January 7, 1950), p. 20. — The italics in the quotations are ours.

⁵ *SRL*, XXXIII, 34 (August 26, 1950), p. 19.

True enough, the pessimistic note is not new. It was not first sounded by the self-appointed prophets of the twentieth century. It was heard already in the lamentations of a man like Matthew Arnold, whose dismal lateralism was expressed in the following pathetic lines, written in 1867:

The Sea of Faith
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
 But now I only hear
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
 Retreating to the breath
 Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles of the world.

 Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really *neither joy, nor love, nor light,*
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
 And we are here as on a *darkling plain*
 Swept with *confused alarms of struggle and flight,*
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.⁶

It is evident, then, that pessimism, negation, and despair, are not new. When Geoffrey Scott says,

I go,
 Lost in a landscape of the mind,
 A country where the lights are low
 And where the ways are hard to find,

he is merely, and almost literally, continuing in the footsteps of his forerunners and forefathers. But it is also clear that the increasing sterility, the spiritual poverty, and bankruptcy of the modern age have intensified that spirit into a condition of hysteria. For, says Thomas Wolfe,

What are we, my brother? We are a phantom flare of grieved desire, the ghostling and phosphoric flickers of immortal time, a brevity of days haunted by the eternity of the earth. We are an unspeakable utterance, an insatiable hunger, an unquenchable thirst; a lust that bursts our sinews, explodes our brains, sickens and rots our guts, and rips our hearts asunder. We are a twist

⁶ *Dover Beach.*

of passion, a moment's flame of love and ecstasy, a sinew of bright blood and agony, a lost cry, a music of pain and joy, a haunting of brief sharp hours, an almost captured beauty, a demon's whisper of unbodied memory. *We are the dupes of time.*⁷

The poetic expressions of this joyless and hopeless spirit are even more wildly hysterical; they often degenerate into gibberish which is blasphemous and revolting.

A typical popular expression of this mood of disillusionment is the song which Noel Coward represents as being sung in a London cabaret . . . in the last scene of his play, *Cavalcade*. It is banal and trite and crude. But not more so than hundreds of contemporaneous songs. It fairly represents a widely held and shrilly screamed attitude:

Blue, Twentieth Century Blues, are getting me down.
Who's escaped those weary Twentieth Century blues?
Why, if there's a God in the sky, shouldn't he grin?
High above this dreary Twentieth Century din,
In this strange illusion,
Chaos and confusion
People seem to lose their way.
What is there to strive for,
Love or keep alive for — say
Hey, hey, call it a day.
Blues, nothing to win or lose.⁸

Tamer poems declare that

The world rolls on forever like a mill.
It grinds out death and life and good and ill;
It has no purpose, heart or mind or will.

Or they complain:

Was ever an insect flying between two flowers
Told less than we are told of what we are?⁹

Modern fiction, says Dr. Luccock, "has been much occupied with the dark capital D's, somber, heavy nouns — Disenchantment, Disillusion, Dismay, Disintegration, Damnation. . . . The extreme of disillusionment, the sense of the futility of life and the world,

⁷ Thomas Wolfe, *Of Time and the River*.

⁸ Noel Coward, *Cavalcade*. Quoted and discussed by Halford E. Luccock, *Contemporary American Literature and Religion* (New York: Willett, Clark and Co., 1934), p. 135.

⁹ E. A. Robinson, *Cavender's House*.

has given a name to a group of novelists, 'the futilitarians.' They passionately declaim the worthlessness of life." In the typical modern novel, characters "die of their own unvoiced despair. Love and hate alike end in soul starvation, heart sickness, despair."¹⁰

The cynical and chaotic mood of the modern age is not limited to the intelligentsia nor to fictional characters. It is found in everyday living. Factory workers and housewives may be heard endorsing suicide on the grounds that "there is nothing after death." Confusion and despondency are widespread.

In the midst of these conditions a book has appeared which contains the remedy for the bewilderment, the aimless living, the anxiety and despair of our generation. It is Einar Billing's *Our Calling*, in a translation by Dr. Conrad Bergendoff.¹¹ The book presents Luther's theological views and practical directions as providing the dependable answer for the questions: "What is the meaning of life? What is its meaning, not merely in general, but for each individual man, woman, and child? How may each person discover and fulfill the true purpose of his life? How may he achieve sureness and joy of living?"

Martin Luther was not a man to regard the problems and perplexities of his fellow men with equanimity. Having discovered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ the complete and (as Dr. Billing emphasizes) the comprehensive solution for his own problems, and realizing the world's urgent need of this same Gospel, Luther exclaimed:

Oh, what a blessed world we should have if people would believe what the Word of God says in regard to their life! Let everyone do his duty in his assigned station. Let him keep the will and command of God ever before his eyes. Then we shall find that Heaven will send a veritable snowfall of blessings and treasures. We, however, instead of obtaining good things, have nothing but trouble and heartache, all of which we richly deserve and even seek.¹²

¹⁰ Luccock, *op. cit.*, pp. 140, 160.

¹¹ Einar Billing, *Our Calling* (Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana Book Concern, 1950). Dr. Billing's book first appeared in 1909. Dr. Bergendoff's translation is based on the fourth edition, of 1920. The publisher has kindly given permission to quote extensively from *Our Calling*.

¹² *Luther's Works*, Walch Ed., XI, 2304.

Oh, that all of us, as spiritual leaders, might be true guides and counselors of human beings harassed by doubts and perplexity; that we might be deeply moved by the increasing despair, cynicism, and spiritual emptiness of our times, by the darkening skepticism of our bleak and joyless age! Oh, that we might be touched by the pathetic terror which has engulfed those who have discovered too late that materialism is not the answer and who, having lost faith in the much-vaunted American way of life, *have no other faith* and no other foundation to support them against the nightmare of approaching destruction! Oh, that we might share with them the answer which Luther found and which he bequeathed to us: the secret of genuinely victorious living!

In a notable editorial, entitled "Chaos, Fear, and the Modern Novel," Harrison Smith, one of the editors of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, recently declared:

The problem that now confronts the modern novelist, whether he understands it or not, is whether to continue the work of destruction and negation or to begin to build again on solid ground. It is possible to conceive that the magnetic influence of nihilism, of the conquest of love by cruelty, of hate over joy, and madness over reason, is already beginning to diminish. . . . It is reasonable to assume, since the damage of which we were warned by earlier writers and by novelists of the "lost generation" has been accomplished, and since we are now facing the stark realization of life on a planet in which civilization may be destroyed, that *the time has come to assess living men and women in other terms. It is even possible to find old words that still have meaning for us who are living in the second fifty years of this century. . . . Courage is a good word and so are faith in the future and religious belief and hope. . . .* There is no doubt that the writers of the near future have on their shoulders an *enormous burden* since they have the power to create the temper and the mood with which our people can face the dark future.¹³

The time has indeed come "to assess living men and women in other terms," but realism prevents us from believing that the average modern novelist is equal to the task. All the more reason for Christian churchmen to assume this truly "enormous burden" and to give clarity for chaos; certainty for confusion; hope for

¹³ SRL, XXXIII, 22 (June 3, 1950), p. 22 f.

despair. We have the equipment. Our great responsibility is to avoid vague optimism and to employ, instead, precise terms which clearly indicate man's position amid the swirling currents of life.

It is that deep concern for clarification which impelled Dr. Billing to write his book and which moved Dr. Bergendoff to translate it. "Nowhere," says Dr. Bergendoff in the Introduction, "have I found a simpler, more direct statement of the relationship of Christian faith and Christian living than in this little book by a keen thinker of the Church of Sweden a generation ago, Einar Billing."

Dr. Billing's book is small, but it is recognized as one of the greatest treatises in modern times. The author, says Dr. Bergendoff, "goes to the heart of the Christian faith and finds how the heart moves the hands of the disciple."

To provide a thoroughgoing remedy against perplexity and despair, Dr. Billing has written a closely reasoned book. Those who have read his discussion will testify that the reading of it is not easy. There is a most intimate connection between every point of the author's argument. It should be stated, too, that the argumentation proceeds, not in straight lines, but in circles — *in circles, however, of the strictest logic*, in ever widening circles coming from the same center. In fact, the author's method is an illustration of the topic of which he speaks; namely, the manner in which Luther found peace and certainty in the various duties of life.

Yet for all its profundity the book is disarmingly and almost deceptively simple in its manner of presentation. There is no straining for effect. There is neither prolixity nor pomposity. There is no use of impressive philosophical terms. The author does not strike a pose. Rather, he is concerned with bringing into the lives of others the sureness and the peace which Luther found.

Dr. Billing's discussion of our calling, written in Luther's spirit of genuine piety and deep humility, must be read and considered in the same spirit.

Some persons read much but derive little or no benefit from their reading. The reason is easily stated. They do not read or study because they *themselves* feel the need of greater wisdom and knowledge. Their reading is done only *for the sake of other people*. Honor, reputation, and goods are the goals that they seek. Others read only because of curiosity. . . . To read the sacred Scriptures profitably, to get a right understanding and a true

knowledge of their contents, he who reads must *agree in his heart* with the message that he reads; he must become such a person as the words indicate. . . . If that inner condition of the soul does not exist together with an informed state of mind, the result will be nothing but useless prattle and controversy, vain inquiries, and frivolousness of spirit, against which Paul writes much in his letters to Timothy and Titus.¹⁴

If we are to meet the challenge of our chaotic day with the clarity of light streaming from Luther's concept of our calling, we need to examine Luther's views with sincerity and humility. Then, even in the midst of these dark days, we shall the more easily gain the joyous confidence of which Luther speaks:

Here is a special comfort against an affliction which commonly besets pious preachers. They fear that the world is too wicked, that preaching will be useless and in vain, and that no one will improve. Such a dismal outlook, Christ says, is to be expected if the sermon brings nothing but the Law of Moses. But where My Word is used and I give the command to preach, success will follow, even as in the case of the draught of fishes which Peter undertook at My command.¹⁵

II. LUTHER'S CONCEPT OF OUR CALLING

A. Meaning of the Term

What is the meaning of the term "our calling"? Many people, if they can give an answer at all, will limit their answer, says Dr. Billing, to words like "trade" and "profession." Yet "anyone who still has an ear sensitive to the sound of the word 'calling,' knows that it contains *more* than all these words. . . . Each one of us is confronted every day of his life by a whole series of duties which lie *outside* our profession, work, or task, yet doubtless belong to the very *heart* of our calling." And again: "One can be an unusually conscientious worker in his profession or trade, and yet *violate* the most *elementary* requirements of faithfulness in one's calling."¹⁶ One may, for example, be honest and efficient in

¹⁴ Loehe, *Der evangelische Geistliche*, II, p. 16 f.

¹⁵ *Luther's Works*, St. Louis Edition, XIII-A:752, 2. Sermon on Luke 5: 1-11, for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

¹⁶ Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 5

his trade or profession, but neglect the *superior* duties of parenthood. We ought to pause here to observe how Luther stressed this view in the Large Catechism.

Since the Sixth Commandment is aimed directly at the state of matrimony and gives occasion to speak of the same, you must well understand and mark, first, how gloriously God honors and extols this estate, inasmuch as by His commandment He both sanctions and guards it. He has sanctioned it above in the Fourth Commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother"; but here He has hedged it about and protected it. Therefore He also wishes us to honor it, and to maintain and conduct it as a divine and blessed estate; because, in the first place, *He has instituted it before all others*, and *therefore* created man and woman separately, not for lewdness, but that they should legitimately live together, be fruitful, beget children, and nourish and train them to the honor of God. Therefore God has also most richly *blessed this estate above all others*, and, in addition, has bestowed on it and *wrapped up in it everything in the world*, to the end that this estate might be well and richly provided for. Married life is therefore no jest or presumption; it is an excellent thing and a matter of divine seriousness. For it is of the highest importance to Him that persons be raised who may serve the world and promote the knowledge of God, godly living, and all virtues, to fight against wickedness and the devil. Therefore I have always taught that this estate *should not be despised nor held in disrepute*, as is done by the blind world and our false ecclesiastics. It should be regarded according to God's Word, by which it is adorned and sanctified. In the Bible, marriage is not merely ranked equally with other estates, but *precedes and surpasses them all, whether they be that of emperor, princes, bishops, or whoever they please. For both ecclesiastical and civil estates must humble themselves and must all be found in this estate*. Therefore it is not a peculiar estate, but the most common and *noblest* estate which pervades all Christendom, yea, which extends through all the world.¹⁷

When Luther mentions *tres ordines*, as in his Genesis Commentary, he significantly employs the sequence *vita oeconomica, politica, ecclesiastica*. And again: "Therefore, in whatever station you may be, whether you be a married man, a magistrate, or a

¹⁷ *The Large Catechism*, in *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis, Mo., 1921), pp. 639, 641.

teacher in the Church. . . ." ¹⁸ When Luther lists specific duties in life, *he names marriage first*, as in one of his sermons on St. John's Day: "Ich meine die Staende, die Gott eingesetzt hat, . . . als da sind *Ehelichsein*, Knecht, Magd, Herr, Frau, Oberherren, Regierer, Richter, Amtleute, Bauer, Buerger, usw." ¹⁹

How greatly we need this reminder that the word "calling" means more than the work we do to obtain an income! How many so-called "successful" men *neglect* the *highest* duties of their earthly calling! They are brilliant lights in commerce and industry, or in their professions, but miserable failures at home. They are like some ministers who are voluble at conferences, but ineffective in their own parish. ²⁰

Rather, this is what is important, this is what counts most: "Der seinem *eigenen Hause* wohl vorstehe." "Having his children in subjection with all gravity. *For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?*" ²¹ These words, although particularly significant for the clergy, contain an emphasis which is important for all: "our calling" includes *much more* than the duties of our profession or business or trade.

"On the other hand," says Dr. Billing, "to find the 'more' which lies beyond this" (i. e., more than, let us say, working in a factory), "we *must not go outside of everyday life*, as if to add to these duties a new group of extraordinary tasks. The word 'calling' is and remains an *everyday* word." ²²

True enough, "it is an everyday word with a *splendor of holy day* about it." This is an important point. The word "calling" is a term possessing high dignity; in fact, our calling invests us with the loftiest kind of distinction and should make us exclaim as joyfully as St. John does: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God!" ²³

¹⁸ *Luther's Works* (Erlangen, 1829), Vol. III, Part 2, page 219.

¹⁹ *Luther's Works*, St. L. Ed., XI, 228:29.

²⁰ The situation recalls Dietrich Vorwerk's famous remark: "Gewiss, sie sind noetig, die Pastorenkraenzchen, die Pfarrerkonferenzen, die Synoden, Missionsfeste, und Kongresse. Aber — *wieviel wird auf den Versammlungen geredet, nur um zu reden!* Wie leicht sind sie eine Schule der *Schwatzhaftigkeit* und *selbstgefaelligen Schoenrednerei!*" (Dietrich Vorwerk, *Kann Auch Ein Pastor Selig Werden?* Schwerin, 1910. Page 53.)

²¹ 1 Tim. 3:4 f.

²² Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

²³ 1 John 3:1.

Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that He has given us a *calling*!

Now, it is true that the term "calling" must not be narrowed to the work that I do for my livelihood. Nor, in the second place, must the wider and fuller meaning be sought in extraordinary activity, for if I *leave the everyday duties*, I lose the *splendor* of the call. "Its holy day splendor would disappear the moment it ceased to be a rather prosaic everyday word." And what, in the third place, *is* the splendor of the call? It is the fact that *God has called us*, that God has given us a calling; yes, more: that He has called us the *sons of God*!

How can we renegades be called the sons of God? The world does not see what is involved here. If it does not ridicule the idea, it may, at best, think it very easy to become a child of God. It does not see that in a world of miracles this is the most marvelous occurrence, that sinners are called sons of God. Nor does it see that this change involved a payment so great that the fantastic billions of modern international exchange are dwarfed into relative insignificance. That payment—let us never forget it—was the blood of the eternal, infinite Son of God. Because of that payment, God does that which never entered the mind of natural man, from fear-stricken Adam in Paradise to terror-stricken man in the chaos of the twentieth century. *God forgives*, and because God forgives, *He calls us the sons of God*.²⁴ That call, that call to be the sons of God, is the *very essence of forgiveness*. God calls us by that name which is sweetest and most precious: we are the children of God.

God shows us that we could not have achieved that priceless *ὑιοθεσία* by ourselves, by what we were or did in our lives. Therefore He gave us His own Son and *with Him all things*.²⁵ By our sin we had lost all things, *also the things of this world*. Many of them are still within our reach, but *they are not ours* when we come into this world. They belong to *God*²⁶ and to *His children*—but by nature *we* are the children of *wrath*. By receiving us back

²⁴ Gal. 4:4 f.

²⁵ 1 Cor. 3:21 — "All things are yours." Cf. Rom. 8:17, 32; 2 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 3:29; 4:7.

²⁶ Ps. 24:1 — "The earth is the Lord's. . . ." Cf. Ex. 9:29; 19:5; Deut. 10:14; Job 41:11; Ps. 50:10-12; 1 Cor. 10:26, 28.

as His children, however, God gives us the *rights* and *privileges* of children, also in regard to the things and to the functions of this earthly life. He restores to us the right of sons, the right to use the things which the Father provides for His children.

Having sacrificed His Son to redeem us, the Father now calls to us: "Be My sons. *Use My gifts*. Do not despise, discard, or abandon them. *Do not look for other blessings or activities*. Use the blessings *placed before you*, within your reach, but *now really use them*. Use them for the glory of My name and for the welfare of men. Serve Me. I call you sons. *That is your calling*."

This somewhat detailed preliminary thought process is what we need if we are to see the meaning of the term "calling" as Luther found and formulated it. It is, of course, the same word as that used in the explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed: "The Holy Ghost has *called* me by the Gospel." But there is *good reason* for this identity of terminology. The Gospel invites us to be the sons of God. That is the call. But the Gospel call is a *comprehensive call*. The Gospel invites us to be the sons of God — each in his own way, each in his *divinely appointed way* — but to *be* the sons of God wherever we are and wherever (and *only* wherever) *God places us*. *That* is our calling.

Besser, in his *Bibelstunden*, 1 Cor. 7:20, paraphrases aptly:

Ein jeglicher bleibe in dem Beruf, darin er berufen ist. Wie einen jeden die evangelische Berufung getroffen hat, also bleibe er.²⁷

Das ist seine Berufung, we properly say. That is his calling.

To the superficial thinker "these two meanings of the word 'call,'" says Dr. Billing, "seem to lie so far apart from each other that at first one is inclined to believe that only by chance one word is used for both. *But it is not chance. In reality it is the same word.*"²⁸

One of the foremost truths that Luther learned as he developed, says Dr. Billing, is this one: "Just as certainly as the call to God's kingdom seeks to lift us infinitely above everything that our everyday duties themselves could give us, just so certainly the call *does not take us away from these duties but more deeply into them.*"²⁹

²⁷ W. F. Besser, *Bibelstunden* (Halle, 1892), VIII, p. 365.

²⁸ Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

The relationship between the Gospel call and our earthly calling is clearly indicated by Dr. Harlesz.

Der irdische Beruf bezeichnet dort (1 Cor. 7:17-24), wie auch sonst dem gemeinen Sprachgebrauch nach, die Stellung, welche die Lebensaufgabe des Einzelnen innerhalb der natuerlich-menschlichen Gemeinschaft einnimmt und in welcher der Einzelne den natuerlich-menschlichen Zwecken seiner eigenen irdischen Existenz und der Existenz dieser Gemeinschaft dient. *An allen diesen Berufen und den ihnen entsprechenden Taetigkeiten aendert der allgemeine Christenberuf nichts. Denn dieser schafft nicht absolut neue Formen der irdischen Lebensbetaetigung, sondern bringt nur fuer alle den Geist rechter Erfuellung, und lehrt die naechere oder entferntere Beziehung erkennen, in welcher alle Sonderberufe der Einzelnen zur Betaetigung der Christentreue und zu deren Erweisung sowohl in den Beziehungen des allgemein menschlichen Daseins an sich als in dessen Zusammenhang mit der Reichsgemeinschaft Christi auf Erden dienen.*³⁰

When Luther learned that truth, "then," says Dr. Billing, "the word 'calling' took on its second meaning," the meaning which we are now considering.

B. History of the Term

The word "calling" in this sense is, says Dr. Billing, "to a certain degree a creation of the Reformation." And he adds:

Whoever would seek to translate our meaning of "call" into foreign languages would soon make a most interesting observation. So long as he confines himself to the Germanic languages, he will without difficulty find an equivalent expression, but when he gets into the Romance languages, he meets difficulties. Words which correspond to our "work," "profession," etc., he will, naturally, find without trouble. But they are all *profane* words. They may probably on occasion be discovered in religious or ethical language, but one notices at once that in reality they are not at home there. In vain one seeks there for such a word as the Swedish "kallelse," the Norwegian and Danish "kald," the German "Beruf," the English "calling," which *binds closely together the vocabulary of religion and everyday work.*³¹

³⁰ G. C. A. Harlesz, *Christliche Ethik* (Guetersloh, 1875), p. 412.

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

We ought to pause here to observe, thankfully, how a linguistic and historical fact of this kind reveals afresh the deep *practical* concern of Luther and his collaborators. It gives the lie to accusations that Lutheran teaching neglects life. It invalidates the modern assertion that doctrinal matters can have no interest for the layman. The truth is that *Biblical teaching is bound closely together with life*, with everyday life. The Bible gives thorough and abundant attention to human conditions, human needs, human activities, and brings them into the right relationship with God and eternity.

What wonderful and blessed results have come about because Luther and his fellow workers were constantly concerned about *practical* issues! Why is it that the Lutheran chorale, and not Gregorian chant, became the greatest^{32a} achievement in church music? The reason is that the Reformers had become *habituated* to the process of joining religious truth with the *everyday problems of the people*: their church music was strongly influenced by the *folk* tunes of the *people*, and thus was, in the best sense of the word, truly popular, although deeply religious, — or, let us say better, truly popular *because* deeply religious and Scriptural.^{32b} And here, in our word "calling," *Beruf*, the heroes of the Reformation have given us a word which is rich in potentiality and power to deepen the spiritual life of the *people* and to enlarge their spiritual vision.

It is the *Reformation* which has given us that word. "As a clearly defined idea," says Dr. Billing, "it comes first to light in the Ref-

^{32a} "Let no one remind me that the German chorale was an importation from the old Plain Chant hymns. . . . The point is not where a composer gets an art form from, but what he makes of it when he has got it. The German Protestants made of the chorale a *living thing*." R. R. Terry, *Catholic Church Music* (London, 1907), p. 216. Cf. E. E. Koch, *Geschichte des Kirchenlieds und Kirchengesangs* (Stuttgart, 1866), I, pp. 474, 459, 243.

^{32b} This habituation to an interrelation between doctrine and practice has, of course, also worked in the opposite direction. It moved Bach to write organ preludes on the so-called Catechism hymns, a group of hymns arranged in the same order as the Six Chief Parts in Luther's Catechism. Part Three of Bach's *Klavieruebung* was composed "to illustrate the Lutheran Catechism by preludes treating the melodies of Luther's familiar hymns on the Commandments, Creed, Prayer, Baptism, Penitence, and Holy Communion." (C. S. Terry, *Bach*. London, 1940. P. 247.) Since Luther had written a larger and a smaller catechism, "Bach gives us a larger and a smaller arrangement of each chorale." (Schweitzer, *J. S. Bach*. London, 1945. P. 289.) In thus going back to Christian truth not only for *incentive*, but also for *subject matter* to perform the work of his calling, Bach has given a striking illustration of the close connection between Christian doctrine and Christian practice.

ormation writings of Luther."³³ Dr. Harlesz is certainly right when he says "*dass es diesem Manne [Luther] wie wenigen gegeben war, als ganzer Christ und ganzer Mensch, und nicht als ein Schultheologe zu reden.*"³⁴ The man who could develop the thought of "our calling" and establish the validity and suitability of that comprehensive term, *Beruf*, must certainly have been "*ein ganzer Christ und ganzer Mensch.*"

Yes, Luther developed the thought. Schmidt, in Kittel's *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*,³⁵ points out:

Luther hat nachdruecklicher als alle anderen vor ihm das Wort "Beruf" (*vocatio*) anstatt im Sinne von "Berufung" als gleichbedeutend mit "Stand" oder "Amt" verwendet.

Elert, in *Morphologie des Luthertums*, says:

Die Gleichsetzung der Begriffe *status* und *vocatio* findet sich vereinzelt bereits in der mittelalterlichen Literatur, auch in der Anwendung auf weltliche Staende. Durch die Bekenntnisse, Katechismen und Predigten ist sie aber zum *Gemeingut des Luthertums* geworden.³⁶

The fact that the term became the property (*Gemeingut*) of the average Lutheran is shown by the frequency with which it occurs in the introductions and chapter summaries of the *Altenburger Bibelwerk*, a work designed for use among the people. The following comment on the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Numbers 16) is typical:

Here we see what a frightful sin it is to go beyond one's *calling* and to push oneself forward in an attempt to become an officeholder in the Church *without* a call thereto. God punished these three men, together with wife and child, and the earth devoured all. We should note well this judgment of God and learn from it how to improve. For that reason God caused the censers of these wicked men to be preserved as memorials, so that everyone would *abide in his calling* and not undertake anything *without a call*.

The speed with which the term established itself is amazing, for, as Dr. Billing points out, in Luther's day the thing itself, the

³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. xvi.

³⁵ Vol. III, p. 493, s. v., κλησις.

³⁶ Vol. II, p. 65.

very concept, was new. It was present, he says, in the New Testament, long before Luther's time.³⁷ We think at once of passages like 1 Cor. 7:20 and 24: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." Dr. Harlesz cites and discusses additional passages, notably Matt. 25:14; Rom. 12:4 f.; 1 Cor. 12; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 3:11; 1 Pet. 4:10.³⁸ But the significance of these passages was inadequately recognized.

Many exegetes deny that a passage like 1 Cor. 7:20 possesses any significance whatever for Luther's concept of *Beruf*. In the Zahn commentary, Bachmann declares himself unable to admit the translation *Berufsstellung* for 1 Cor. 7:20. He insists that the word κλήσις refers to the call of the Holy Ghost. Thayer, too, although speaking somewhat more moderately, says that the word here is used "somewhat peculiarly, of the condition in which the calling finds one, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or freeman."

Grotius, however, whom Calov in this instance quotes without the usual refutation, shows the relationship between the terms κλήσις and ἐκλήθη in 1 Cor. 7:20.

This is paronomasia, a play on words. The word κλήσις means one thing, and the word ἐκλήθη means another. Κλήσις signifies someone's station in life, his condition as Jew, Greek, freeman, bondsman, and the like. The verb ἐκλήθη, however, refers to the time at which someone came to the faith.³⁹

Grotius refers to the Niphal form of *qará*, to show that the term was current already in Old Testament times. We should perhaps note that *nigrá* means to call by name; the Kal form, *qará*, means "berufen; jemanden zu etwas bestimmen"; in other words, what we understand by "our calling": never just to be named, but to be called to something; not only "rufen" but also "berufen." Elert also points out: "Luther hat den Ursinn der 'Berufung' zu einem bestimmten Beruf niemals vergessen."⁴⁰

³⁷ Luther himself said: "St. Paulus hat in seinen Episteln reicher und artiger von Tugenden und guten Werken geschrieben denn alle Philosophen; denn er erhebt hoch und preist herrlich die Werke des Berufs an den Gottfuerchtigen und Christen." *Luther's Works*, Weimar Ed., *Tischreden*, 4, p. 45, No. 3970.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 412-415.

³⁹ Abraham Calov, *Biblia Novi Testamenti Illustrata* (Frankfurt, 1676), Vol. II, p. 319.

⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

Calov's view is shared by Karl Holl. In his study *Die Geschichte des Worts Beruf*⁴¹ Dr. Holl says:

Von diesem strengen Sprachgebrauch (sc. κλήσις: Berufung) weicht nur eine Stelle ab. 1 K. 7, 20 schreibt Paulus: Jeder soll in der κλήσις, in der er berufen wurde, auch verbleiben. Unser sprachliches Wissen reicht noch nicht so weit, um sicher zu entscheiden, ob Paulus hier zusammen mit einem kühnen Gedanken⁴² eine ebenso kühne Wortumprägung gewagt hat: die Berufung des Christen schliesst auch die Lebensstellung, in der er sich befindet, als etwas Gottgeordnetes mit ein, oder ob er einen schon vorhandenen, freilich dann sehr seltenen und höchstens volkstümlichen Sprachgebrauch aufnimmt: κλήσις = das, wovon einer seinen Namen trägt, also sein "Stand" oder sein "Beruf" in unserem Sinn. Wahrscheinlicher ist wohl das letztere.

Although Schmidt rejects this theory, he subsequently refers to 1 Cor. 7:20 as "die *eine* Stelle, an der allenfalls 'Beruf' in dem uns heute geläufigen Sinne gemeint sein koennte."

C. Source of the Concept

It is one thing, however, to have a truth included in the Bible, but it is another thing to have that truth *developed*, or *systematized*, into an *idea*, a definite *concept*, and *formulated* into a convenient *term*. The Church herself, as Dr. Pieper points out, is responsible for terminology like *trinitas*, *persona*, *essentia*.⁴³ A similar situation existed in regard to Luther's word *Beruf*. Although the basic truth in regard to our calling is present in the New Testament, "the thing is not fixed in a word," says Dr. Billing, "not developed into an idea."⁴⁴

How, then, did Luther find the idea of the call? Certainly he did not find it in the Catholic Church.

Die Beschlagnahme des Titels der vocatio durch das Moench-tum hat es nun auch im Abendland lange *verhindert*, dass eine

⁴¹ Quoted in Kittel, *loc. cit.*

⁴² Cf. Grotius as quoted by Calov, above.

⁴³ F. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik* (St. Louis, 1924), I, pp. 494—518.

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 7.—Schmidt gives the following opinion: "Fuer Paulus ist der 'Beruf,' der 'Stand,' das 'Amt' des Menschen nicht so wichtig gewesen wie fuer Luther, der hierbei zu erklæaren und durchzudruecken hatte, dass nicht das Moench-tum einen Beruf habe, sondern jeder Christenmensch innerhalb der Welt und ihrer Arbeit." (*Loc. cit.*)

entsprechende *religioese* Schaetzung der *weltlichen* Staende sich entwickelte oder dass das Wort fuer sie [i.e., for these secular callings] ueblich wurde. 1 Kor. 7:20 ist so gut wie im Osten nach dieser Seite hin zunaechst *unwirksam* geblieben.⁴⁵

In answer to the question "How did Luther come to find this concept?" Dr. Billing makes a most important observation.

Whoever knows Luther even but partially knows that his various thoughts do not lie alongside each other like pearls on a string, held together only by common authority or perchance by a line of logical argument, but that they all, as tightly as the petals of a rosebud, *adhere to a common center*, and radiate out like the rays of the sun from *one glowing core*, namely, the *Gospel of the forgiveness of sins*. Anyone wishing to study Luther would indeed be in no peril of going astray were he to follow this rule: *never believe that you have a correct understanding of a thought of Luther before you have succeeded in reducing it to a simple corollary of the thought of the forgiveness of sins*. As examples from various viewpoints we might point to Luther's theory of the sacraments, his idea of the church, his doctrine of Christian liberty, and certainly also, to his teaching about the call. These all reflect the way in which he himself arrived at this teaching. He found them all in the forgiveness of sins. As far as the thought of the call is concerned, we might put it thus: when Luther came to realize that the call whereby God calls all of those who have learned to see "that they cannot by their own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him" is a call not through the Law but "through the Gospel," then the new idea of the call was born.⁴⁶

The reason why the doctrine of the call has its source in the doctrine of divine forgiveness has already been indicated,⁴⁷ but it should be stated here in fuller detail. The reason is a profound one; yet it is very simple and certainly most beautiful and lovely.

The Gospel call, the call of forgiveness, comes to us from God, who says: "Be My children. Be My children wherever you are and with those things of Mine which you find near." *Das ist unsere Berufung*. That is the calling which we have received, "that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve God

⁴⁵ Holl, quoted in Kittel, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁷ Section II, A in this discussion.

⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 7 f.

without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life."⁴⁸

What a privilege! It is inexpressibly great. Our calling is a wonderful gift of divine grace and is synonymous with the gift of forgiveness itself.

It is an understatement to call Luther's main teachings corollaries of the forgiveness of sins.

Ultimately, they are differing expressions, each from its point of view, of the *same great gift* to which the word, forgiveness of sins, directly points. We could take all of them in order and say something like this: The church is the forgiveness of sins, the sacraments are the forgiveness of sins, Christian liberty is the forgiveness of sins, the call is the forgiveness of sins.⁴⁹

Those who have meditated deeply on divine forgiveness will agree that Dr. Billing's language is not too strong. It is, in fact, essential for a true understanding of Luther's idea of our calling.

Of course, the Church is the Church; yet the *essence* of the Church, the restored relationship with God and the fellowship of the saints, the children of God, is the forgiveness of sins. It is the forgiveness of sins *in action*.

Of course, the Apology, referring to Articles VII and VIII of the Augsburg Confession, calls the Church "the Body of Christ,"⁵⁰ but it also says:

The Christian Church consists not only in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially (principaliter, vornehmlich) in *inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart*, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God.⁵¹

Again it is true, as the Apology says, that "the Church is the Kingdom of Christ,"⁵² but it is also true, as the Apology further says, that "the Kingdom of Christ is *righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Ghost*."⁵³ Or we may say with St. Paul himself, as the Apology also does in a later passage: "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but the Kingdom of God *is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*."⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Luke 1:74 f.

⁴⁹ Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁵⁰ Apology, Art. VII and VIII, in *Triglot*, p. 227.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Triglot*, p. 231.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Rom. 14:17.

It is exceedingly important for our discussion to remember here, as Dr. Stoekhardt points out, that *St. Paul is not speaking about Christian virtues.*

Δικαιοσύνη ist nicht das rechtschaffene Wesen der Christen; εἰρήνη ist nicht die friedfertige Gesinnung gegen den Naechsten. Δικαιοσύνη ist die Gerechtigkeit κατ' ἐξοχήν, die Gerechtigkeit, die vor Gott gilt, die Glaubensgerechtigkeit. Χαρά ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ ist die Freude, welche die gerechtfertigten Christen beseelt, welche der ihnen innewohnende Heilige Geist in ihnen wirkt. Das sind die *wesentlichen Gueter* des Reichs Gottes.⁵⁵

These are the essential gifts of the Kingdom of God. Or, as St. Paul says, the Kingdom of God *is* these essential gifts. The Kingdom of God *is* the forgiveness of sins.

This statement has nothing to do with the false teaching that "the invisible Church becomes visible when it uses the means of grace."⁵⁶ St. Paul's words do not conflict with his statement to Timothy: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the *Lord* knoweth them that are His."⁵⁷ Certainly they do not conflict with, but they agree with and illustrate, the words of Jesus: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, Lo, there! For, behold, *the Kingdom of God is within you.*"⁵⁸ It is *in* the heart. There is a most intimate and most beautiful relationship between the words of Jesus and those of Paul: "The Kingdom of God is within you. The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The Church is indeed the forgiveness of sins.

The statement that the Church is the forgiveness of sins is not so much a definition of the Church as it is an exemplification of the forgiveness of sins. What Dr. Billing emphasizes is that *forgiveness does not exist in abstracto*, or merely theoretically. It *realizes itself* in a definite, practical condition of life.

A runaway boy is received back into his family and is told that

⁵⁵ Stoekhardt, *Commentar ueber den Brief Pauli an die Roemer* (St. Louis, 1907), p. 602.

⁵⁶ Discussed by F. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, III, p. 471 f.; Engelder, Arndt, Graebner, Mayer, eds., *Popular Symbolics* (St. Louis, Mo., 1934), p. 101 f.; Wicke, *A Catechism of Differences* (Milwaukee, 1950), p. 35 f.

⁵⁷ 2 Tim. 2:19.

⁵⁸ Luke 17:20 f.

he has been forgiven. If he asks: "What is my forgiveness?" a correct answer would be: "This — this family circle, which you again make up; this precious relationship; your restoration — is your forgiveness."

We may say, of course, that the forgiveness conferred by the father precedes the return and the readoption of the runaway boy. Actually, however, forgiveness and readoption coincide. When the father forgives the boy he readopts him into the family circle. The two actions are inseparable. The readoption, for all practical purposes, *is there* as an objective fact.

We have a ghastly counterpart to this blessed situation in regard to sin. Hatred may serve as an illustration. When a man hates, he murders. For all practical purposes (of judgment), the deed has been done. "Whosoever hateth his brother *is* a murderer."⁵⁹

When the father forgives, he readopts. When the boy returns, he merely appropriates to himself the gift of readoption. The readoption of the boy *is* his forgiveness, or, if we prefer, the *form* which his forgiveness takes. The Church — communion with God — *is* the forgiveness of sins. God's forgiveness of our sins is not theoretical, but practical. It does not operate *in abstracto*, but *in concreto*. The Church is the forgiveness.

Our calling is another glorious and comforting proof that divine forgiveness does not operate *in abstracto*. When God calls to us: "Be My children," He is extending the hand of forgiveness. He invites us to join the heavenly family.

Now, this call "Be My children" is not extended to spirits, but to human beings, consisting of body and soul, living in this world. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." But we are now children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore our heavenly Father tells us: "All things are yours, whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours."⁶⁰ "Son . . . all that I have is thine,"⁶¹ thine to use for My glory and for the benefit of man, thine to use wherever thou art.

That is how God calls us: He invites us to be His children and to share in that which is His, His deeds and His gifts. Now we

⁵⁹ 1 John 3:15. Hence Moses' command against hatred, Lev. 19:17.

⁶⁰ 1 Cor. 3:21 f.

⁶¹ Luke 15:31.

have a *calling*: it is the privilege of using the Father's treasures as He would use them—for His glory. That is the form which the forgiveness of our sins has taken.

The fact that we may and can serve God in our various stations and conditions of life is nothing less than *divine grace in action*. Our calling is the forgiveness of sin. It is one of the many forms of the forgiveness of sins. That is how we must view it. That is how Luther viewed it. That is Luther's concept of our calling, a concept discovered in the doctrine of divine forgiveness. *In the forgiveness of sins—that is where Luther found the doctrine of our calling*. This is the chief point of Dr. Billing's illuminating and penetrating treatise.

D. Distinctiveness of Luther's Concept

It is self-evident that the manner in which Luther arrived at the truth concerning our calling, the nature of his discovery, and, above all, the *source* where he found this teaching—that all these basic factors would vitally affect his whole view of "*Beruf*," calling. Actually, the circumstances surrounding Luther's discovery caused his concept of "*Beruf*" to be *vastly different from the view of all those who have not found it in the forgiveness of sins*. This is Dr. Billing's next major observation.

All those who do not proceed from the forgiveness of sins regard our calling in life as a duty which we have to fulfill. To Luther, however, "the call is primarily a *gift*, and only in the second or third place a duty."⁶²

Surely, there can be no other view for him who lives, as Luther did, in the forgiveness of sins. In Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, God gives Himself to us with all His blessings. "Ein Christenmensch ist ein freier Herr ueber alle Dinge. . . ." ⁶³ Everything, everything before us, visible and invisible, is God's gift to us. God has really, thoroughly, completely forgiven us and has received us back into His family. Everything *on earth*, the privilege of establishing a family, of tilling the soil, of baking bread, of spinning and weaving, of having a home and keeping it clean, of working at a lathe or at a desk, of sweeping floors and dusting furniture and washing diapers—all these are His gift.

⁶² Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁶³ St. L. ed., XIX:988.

This is what Luther cries out to the farmer at his plow, the artisan in the shop, the servant girl in the house: Rejoice and praise God, for also to you He offers the forgiveness of sins and with it all that He Himself owns and has, life and salvation; yes, even more, He gives Himself, free access to Himself, the fellowship of children with a father.⁶⁴

See what *joyousness* follows from this view! If everything is a gift, then all that remains for me to do is to *praise God*, to praise Him for this great, comprehensive, all-inclusive gift of the forgiveness of sins. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me."⁶⁵ God desires praise, *and that is what my use of His gifts is. That is what my calling is: it is continuous praise of God.*

That is Luther's view of our calling. It is a lofty, exalted view. Luther's concept of "*Beruf*" reveals our calling in its true glory and nobility. "Dominant throughout is his praising God for His infinite gift, and the gift is none other than the forgiveness of sins."⁶⁶ The person who has received his calling from the hand of God, the person who has found his calling in the forgiveness of sins, is moved to joyous praise of God and *sees his work for what it is: an act of thanksgiving*, the only act, but most assuredly the very act, with which God is well pleased. "Wer Dank opfert, der preiset mich."

Since Luther saw clearly in regard to the nature of our calling, need we be surprised that it was he who, more than any other religious leader of modern times, knew how to glorify *every* calling and to praise particularly the so-called *lowly* and *humble* forms of work? There has never again been a man who so clearly showed the preciousness of humble work, because there has never again been a man who so continually lived in, and set forth, the light of the forgiveness of sins, the light which enables us to see all things in their true character.

Luther loved to show the glory of the homely tasks of married life. Moreover, he possessed great skill in showing the cause that prevents us from seeing these activities in their true glory.

Our mistake is that we let our feelings guide us in judging what God does. We do not consider His will. Instead, we think only of our desire. For that reason we cannot recognize His works for what they are. As a result, we call the good, bad; we derive

⁶⁴ Billing, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Ps. 50:23.

⁶⁶ Billing, *loc. cit.*

unhappiness from that which should have given us joy. Nothing, not even death, is so bad that it cannot become sweet and bearable, if only I know and am sure that it pleases God. Then I immediately [!] experience the truth of Solomon's words: "He obtaineth favor of the Lord (Prov. 18:22), er wird ein Wohlgefallen von Gott erschoepfen."⁶⁷

What confidence in God! Whatever pleases God *must be good!*⁶⁸ "What pleaseth God, that pleaseth me."⁶⁹ What firm trust in the providence of God! And the source? The forgiveness of sins. There God conclusively, irrefutably *proved* Himself interested in my good. Now I know: "He will freely give us all things."⁷⁰

But you will find that human reason, that clever whore whom the heathen followed when they thought they were smartest, follows a different course. It looks at married life, turns up its nose, and says: "What, I should rock the baby's cradle? I should wash diapers, make beds, smell a stench, sit up at night and take care of a crying infant? And, having done all this, I should take care of a wife, support her, work hard, have this worry and that worry, work here and there, suffer this and endure that, and experience whatever other grief and misery married life has to offer? I should be such a prisoner? O du elender, armer Mann, hast du ein Weib genommen, pfui, pfui, des Jammers und Unlusts. It is better to remain single. Then one can lead a quiet life, without worry. I will become a priest and a nun and will encourage my children to do the same.

But what does Christian faith say to all this? *It opens its eyes* and (by means of the light streaming from the forgiveness of sins) views all these lowly, unattractive, despised works *with spiritual vision*. In this way it discovers that all these tasks are ornamented as with the most precious gold and jewels, *for all of them are dignified by the fact that God has pleasure in them*. Therefore faith says: "O God, I am certain that Thou hast created me and that Thou hast caused this child to be born from my body. I know that all these tasks are pleasing to Thee."⁷¹ Therefore I

⁶⁷ *Luther's Works*, Weimar Ed., Vol. 10-II, p. 295.

⁶⁸ Cf. No. 521 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

⁶⁹ *The Lutheran Hymnal*, No. 529.

⁷⁰ Rom. 8:32.

⁷¹ This apparently simple statement is actually, as the remainder of the paragraph shows, a most profound truth.

declare that I am not angry that I must rock the cradle for the child, and wash its diapers, and take care of it and its mother. How did I become *worthy* [!!!] of all this, without any merit of my own, so that now I am sure that it is Thy creature which I am serving and Thy loving will which I am performing? Oh, how gladly I will do whatever needs to be done, even though it be lowlier and more despised! Now neither frost nor heat, neither toil nor trouble, shall move me to grumble or complain, for I know that the things which have happened to me are the result of Thy good pleasure."

A wife should have the same kind of thoughts in the midst of her work. When she nurses the child, rocks it to sleep, bathes it, and performs other tasks, or when she does other work and helps her husband and is obedient, she should remember: All these are noble deeds, works of purest gold. Moreover, this is the way to comfort and strengthen a wife in her hour of travail. We are not to use legends of St. Margaret or other foolish stories popular among women. We should speak in this manner: "Remember, Greta, that you are a woman and that God is pleased with this work in you. Comfort yourself joyfully and with His will. Do that which He rightfully asks you to do. Give birth to the child, and do so with all your strength. If you die, go in peace; you are blessed indeed, for you are dying in the midst of noble service and obedience to God. Yes, if you were not a wife, then you ought now, even for the sake of this one work, wish that you were a wife and that you might suffer and die so excellently in the very work and will of God. For here is the word of God which has so created you and planted such travail in you." Tell me, is not this, too, a means of *obtaining favor from God* (as Solomon says, Prov. 18:22), even in the midst of such great distress? ⁷²

And if we ask, Why this certainty of divine favor, of divine good pleasure? the answer is: Because the individual is doing the only work that can please God. He is thanking God and praising Him. And why is he thanking God? Because he views his calling in the only right way, in the Lutheran way, in the Biblical way: as a gift out of the hand of his forgiving God.

Elert, referring to Luther's concept of the call, says:

Es ist ein *Geschenk Gottes*, dass er uns den Naechsten sendet, den Nachbarn zugesellt, der Obrigkeit unter-, der Familie ein-

⁷² *Weimar Ed.*, p. 295 f.

ordnet. Denn damit bezeichnet er uns die Punkte, an denen wir Dienst und Liebe anzusetzen haben. Sind diese Kreise Ausdruck der "Staende," so ist auch der Dienst in ihnen Befolgung der Berufung [*dankbare Befolgung der Berufung*]. *Deshalb ist auch der Begriff des Berufs in Luthers Sinne ganz ernst zu nehmen, wenn er ihn anwendet auf die Hausmutter, auf den Untertan als solchen oder auf den Helfer, der sich in einer aktuellen Notlage fuer den Naechsten einsetzt.*⁷³

Most assuredly Luther regards humble domestic activity as a calling; in fact, he regards it as a calling whose glory is stoutly to be maintained against those who like to indulge in contemptuous and cynical cavil.

Nun sage mir: Wenn ein Mann hinginge und wuesche die Windeln oder taet sonst am Kinde ein veraechtlich Werk, und jedermann spottete seiner und hielt ihn fuer einen Maulaffen und Frauenmann, so ers doch taete in solch obgesagter Meinung und christlichem Glauben, Lieber, sage, *wer spottet hier des Andern am feinsten?* Gott lacht mit allen Engeln⁷⁴ und Kreaturen nicht dass er die Windeln waescht, sondern dass ers im Glauben tut. Jener Spoetter aber, *die nur das Werk sehen und den Glauben nicht sehen*, spottet Gott mit aller Kreatur als der groessten Narren auf Erden, ja, sie spotten sich nur selbst und sind des Teufels Maulaffen mit ihrer Klugheit.⁷⁵

Because Luther lived in the light of the forgiveness of sins, he saw clearly in regard to the true nature of marriage. In his Genesis Commentary he says:

Formerly marriage was described in this way: Marriage is the state in which man and wife are brought together and live together so closely that they may not leave one another during this life. But such a definition or description of marriage is not complete or sufficient; it does not mention the final purpose, nor the cause, which constitutes marriage. It mentions only the *causa materialis*. It is better to give this definition: Marriage is the state in which a man and a woman are brought together in an

⁷³ *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁷⁴ "Know, now, that these (everyday duties) are the true, holy, and godly works, in which, with all the angels, God rejoices, in comparison with which all human holiness is but stench and filth, and, besides, deserves nothing but wrath and damnation."—Luther's Large Catechism, "The Fifth Commandment," in *Triglot*, p. 637.

⁷⁵ *Luther's Works*, Weimar Ed., *loc. cit.*

orderly and divine manner, and it has been instituted so that *we may call upon God in this estate* [!]; furthermore, so that we may have children and bring them up, who, in turn, are to perform the tasks of church government and world government.⁷⁶

It is highly significant that Luther thereupon adds these words: Therefore Christian doctrine, which we proclaim according to the teaching of the *Gospel* and of *faith* and which sets forth how we are to conduct ourselves in a godly and honorable manner in this life, treats of the marriage estate as the first and foremost point.⁷⁷

Marriage is to be viewed "according to the teaching of the Gospel." It is in the light of the Gospel, the light of the Gospel *call*, that our *whole* calling must be viewed. Only in that light will it be properly understood. In that light our calling will be seen as a *gift*, for which we thank and praise God.

Because Luther found his calling in the inexpressibly sweet doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, he was full of *joy* and was able to impart this joy to others in their calling. "Should not the heart, then, leap and melt for joy when going to work and doing what is commanded?" asks Luther.⁷⁸ "Here you have many precious and great good works, of which you can *joyfully* boast against all religious orders, chosen without God's word and commandment."⁷⁹ And again:

If this truth could be impressed upon the poor people, a servant girl would *leap* and *praise* and *thank God*. With her tidy work, for which she ordinarily receives only earthly support and wages, she would acquire such a treasure as all that are esteemed the greatest saints have not obtained. Is it not an excellent boast to know and say that if you perform your daily domestic task, this is better than all the sanctity and ascetic life of monks? And you have the promise, in addition, that you shall prosper in all good and fare well. How can you lead a more blessed and holier life as far as your works are concerned? For in the sight of God *faith is what really renders a person holy, and alone serves Him*, but the works are for the service of man. There you have every-

⁷⁶ St. L. Ed., II:360.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ The Large Catechism, "The Fourth Commandment," in *Triglöt*, p. 615.

⁷⁹ The Large Catechism, "The Sixth Commandment," in *Triglöt*, p. 643.

thing good, protection and defense in the Lord, a *joyful conscience* and a gracious God besides, who will reward you a hundredfold.⁸⁰

Oh, how we need this evangelical, cordial, joyous note in our preaching! How often we are inclined to engage in "*Gesetz-treiberei*"! How much preaching and teaching is joyless and cheerless!

The greatest contribution we can make toward relieving the confusion and chaos of our time is to deal with the *individual*. We must enable him to find joy, strength, and peace in the certainty of redeeming love. He will find those precious gifts when he has learned to recognize the voice of his heavenly Father and the glorious calling which is his.

Oh, that we could move the victims of modern confusion and despair to find light and joy in that source! Only those who accept the forgiveness of sins see themselves and their calling in the true light. And those who live in the light of the forgiveness of sins can truly perform their calling in only one way: as an act of praise to God for the *gift* of that calling. Their calling moves them to joyous thanksgiving.

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and *everlasting joy* upon their heads. They shall obtain *joy* and *gladness* and — oh, take note of it, you gloomy and grief-stricken victims of modern pessimism, nihilism, and despair! — "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."⁸¹

Oh, that we could persuade those who walk the brightly illuminated streets of modern civilization, but whose heart is filled with chaotic darkness, to believe that "the Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!"⁸²

Our calling — a wondrously high privilege! But it is more: a uniquely effective remedy against the restlessness, confusion, and lassitude resulting from frustration and futility. He who has learned to hear and to heed his calling has found certainty and joy, peace and power — all of them the result of love. Even though he lives in "the age of terror," he discovers every day that "there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear."⁸³

Milwaukee, Wis.

⁸⁰ *Trigl.*, p. 623.

⁸¹ Is. 35:10.

⁸² Rom. 14:17.

⁸³ 1 John 4:18.

HOMILETICS

A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY LOVE TO THOSE IN NEED

The Theme for December.—The Epistle for the first Sunday in Advent describes the Christian's behavior in view of the second coming. The Gospel stresses Christ's Lordship. The monthly theme gets good attention in the Epistle for the second Sunday in Advent. The Christmas Epistle stresses the new life and hence its concern of love. The text chosen below is the outstanding contribution of the month to the theme.

Sermon Study on Hebrews 10:19-25 for the First Sunday in Advent

This Eisenach Epistle for the first Sunday in Advent is well chosen, for in one grand sentence it summarizes the faith and determination of the Christian as a priest of God for the entire new church year.

Grammatically this one sentence is composed of a participial statement and three hortative subjunctives: "Let us draw near"—"let us hold fast"—and "let us consider." The participial phrase, vv. 19-21, in pointing back to and summarizing what the believer enjoys as a result of Christ's work in sacrificing Himself for us, gives the motivation for heeding the three exhortations.

Vv. 19-21: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God." The "therefore" (οὖν) points back to all that has been written from chapter seven on. In the word "brethren" writer and reader are named as fellow believers, even though not all the readers are strong Christians and some are even in danger of backsliding. The participle "having" has two objects. The one is "boldness" (παρρησίαν), literally, openness, boldness in speech, then confidence and assurance. This assurance deals with the entrance of the Ho-

liet, of the Sanctuary (τῶν ἁγίων) of God. Before one will heed the exhortation "Let us draw near," one must have the confidence that the entrance of the place is open. This confidence we can have because the entrance is assured in connection with the blood of Jesus. Jesus' blood — His suffering and death — has opened the "Holiest" for us.

The relative clause in v. 20 modifies "the entrance" and explains in fuller details that Christ has made a newly made and living way to the Sanctuary of God by means of His flesh. The aorist form of the verb (ἐνεκαίνισεν) (made new) states the historical fact, an act done "once for all." The reference is to all that the writer has said about Christ as our High Priest. This way made by Christ is indeed newly made and living: newly made in reference to the old way of the Law, which had failed, and in reference to the short time since Christ had shed His blood on the Cross; and living because the way is Christ, who is Life, and because it makes alive all those who walk thereon.

As the veil in the Old Testament tabernacle or Temple was the only means of entering the inner sanctuary, so Jesus' flesh is the only means of entrance into the Sanctuary of God. Without Jesus' flesh, apart from the sacrifice of His flesh on the Cross, there is no means for entering into God's saving presence and into saving communion with Him. "The crucified Christ is the only entrance veil." The blood theology of Christ is the only theology that gives an open door to God and heaven.

Expressly the writer to the Hebrews states that this entrance was made "for us." Christ's work was vicarious, substitutionary. Also among the addressees of this Letter were all kinds of people, but all of them, together with the inspired writer, are included in this "for us."

In this opening participial phrase is summarized and clearly stated the priesthood of all believers — every believer has the assurance that the way to the presence of God is open for him. Every believer personally can go confidently to the throne of God because of the sacrifice of Christ's flesh and blood. No intermediary priest is needed. This is an assuring, encouraging, and comforting truth as we enter the new church year. With certainty we can proclaim in the words of the Gradual: "All they that wait on Thee shall not

be ashamed, O Lord." Rightly in the words of the Introit we say: "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths," for that way and path leads directly to the throne of the gracious Lord. Every believer that remembers this truth throughout the church year is blessed indeed.

The second object of the participle "having" is "Great Priest" (ἱερεῖα μέγαν). This Great Priest is Jesus, "who is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (7:25). All that the writer has said in the entire Epistle regarding Jesus as Priest is referred to in this brief statement. This Great Priest is "over the house of God," not only over the house of Israel or any other separate group of people. Recalling 3:6: "whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end," and such passages as 1 Cor. 3:7; Eph. 2:21-22, where the Christian is named as the temple of God, we are here reminded that Christ rules with His grace and mercy over us for our eternal salvation.

V. 22. Having given in the participial phrase the basis for the motivation for the admonitions, the inspired writer continues with three hortative subjunctives in which he portrays the actions of individuals who have the confidence of an entrance to God and the Great Priest. The first of these is: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." "Let us draw near" (προσερχώμεθα) is a liturgical term and points to worship. To draw near means to enter actually into the Holiest of God, to come to Him in repentance and faith, in prayer and worship. This is an admonition to stop being separated from God and apart from Him.

This drawing near is characterized in two ways — "with a true heart" and "in full assurance of faith." All coming to God and all worship of Him must be sincere and without hypocrisy. As we come to the throne of God, as we come into His presence in worship, all pretending, all falseness, must be far from us. Furthermore, this drawing near can be done in full certainty, with a faith "grown up to full persuasion that when we come to God by Christ, we shall have audience and acceptance." No need for

any misbelief or unbelief, no need for any hesitancy or doubt. What an encouragement for us as we enter a new year of grace!

That such drawing near is within the reach of all is indicated by two participial phrases that modify the subject of the sentence. We can draw near with a true heart and in full assurance of faith because we have been (perfect participle) cleansed by sprinkling as to our hearts from an evil conscience and have been washed as to our bodies with pure water. Both verbs from which the participles are derived remind us of the cleansing of the High Priest in the Old Testament—he was sprinkled with blood (Ex. 27:21; Lev. 8:30) and washed with water (Ex. 40:12; Lev. 8:6). Like those high priests of old, we must be cleansed and washed before we draw near to God. Such cleansing and washing has happened to us—we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, Heb. 2:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 1:7, and we have been washed with the pure water of Baptism.

To be sprinkled from an evil conscience means to be sprinkled and thus to be cleansed and set free from the evil conscience. Modern theories regarding conscience may try to explain it away and seek to lull us into being unconcerned, but the truth remains that we are able to approach God uncondemned only if that evil conscience, realized or unrealized, is removed by the cleansing of Christ's blood. Many psychiatric cases, many cases of alcoholism, are the result of the evil conscience remaining. An evil conscience still has the power to drive one into the outer darkness of despair and damnation in this life and in eternity. But we have been cleansed as to our hearts from the evil conscience. Rejoice, and draw near!

The only washing the New Testament knows is the washing of Baptism (Eph. 5:25-27; Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16). The perfect participle points out that we have been washed and are now washed—the permanent efficacy of Baptism performed only once. The adjective "pure" refers not so much to germ-free and dirt-free water as to the effect the water of washing has.

Throughout the new church year we are to draw near to God—in the hearing of His Word, in His service, in prayer and worship—being enabled to do so in sincerity and in confidence because

we have been cleansed by Christ's blood and washed of all our sins in Baptism.

V. 23. The second hortative subjunctive brings the exhortation: "Let us hold fast the confession of hope unbent, for faithful is He that promised." The Greek text has "hope," as Luther has, and not "faith," as in the King James Version. This admonition exhorts us to more than holding fast to the confession of our hope, more than subjective confessing; it encourages to hold fast to the objective confession, to the words and to the expressions of our hope which embody what we hope for. The hope is of course our salvation and deliverance from sin, death, and the devil in the fullest sense.

The application to ourselves is evident. We are not to give up the creeds, the confessions, such as the very words of the Scripture which embody our hope, such as the Apostles' Creed, and other creeds. This is a warning against the tenets of unbelieving Biblical Criticism and the ancient and modern theories and attacks on inspiration and the use of creeds and confessions. Our use of the Scripture readings in the service, of the responses and the fixed liturgical chants, of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, of the Lord's Prayer, is a practice that is in agreement with this admonition. In these as priests of God we are to be faithful in the new church year.

We are to hold fast without wavering, literally, "unbent." As the flagpole stands firm and erect in spite of the winds and storms, so we are to remain unbent in spite of all temptations and adversities and indifference and tribulations. Our hope will undergo attacks, from within and from without, but we will hold fast the confession thereof unbent.

Again the writer mentions a reason for the confidence and assurance we can have by declaring: "Faithful is He that promised." When confession seems to bring pain and distress, when confession seems rather foolish and useless, then we are to remember that the Lord God, who has given us our hope, is completely trustworthy, He will keep and carry out every promise He has ever made. His faithfulness will enable and motivate us to be faithful.

V. 24. "The first admonition deals with the heart, the second with the mouth (confession), the third with conduct. The first

with God, the second with the world, the third with the Church." (Lenski on Hebrews.) "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." The verb (*κατανοῶμεν*) literally means "to fix one's mind upon." Instead of on selfish, self-centered thinking, each of us is to fix his thinking on one another, considering what the wants, needs, weaknesses of one another are, and what we may do to help. This is to be done for the purpose (*εἰς* with the accusative) of inciting, encouraging, stimulating, one another to love and to good works.

Self-centered thinking results in a double loss—to one's self and to one's fellow Christian. Consideration for others and for one another brings a double gain—to one's self and to one's fellow Christian, for both are stimulated to love and good works. This admonition places on each of us the duty and obligation, perhaps rather the opportunity, of doing anything and everything to strengthen and to arouse the other to great love and good works—a word of friendliness, a word of admonition, a deed of kindness. Every priest of God must seek to stimulate every other priest of God in the exercise of his faith. The love of each is to grow, the good works of each are to increase in number.

Two essential features of this considering one another are mentioned in verse 25, by means of two nominative participles modifying the subject of the sentence. The first is: "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." Although the custom for some was to desert and to abandon the assembly of the Christians, we must not, if we wish to stimulate one another. The value of the church service and the church meeting is not only the benefit received from the hearing and the learning of the Word of God which will make and keep our faith strong and our love active, but also the benefit received from the fellowship by which we are aroused to greater love and good works. The Christian assembly is in a true and high sense a "pep" meeting. As priests of God do not want to stay away from any church meeting (service, voters' assembly, Women's Guild, Walther League, Synod convention, etc.) where the Word and work of the Church is heard and discussed. It is the concern of every Christian that his fellow Christians meet with him in Christian assembly.

The second essential feature of considering one another unto

a stimulation of love and good works is: "But exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." As the Christians meet together in Christian assembly, whenever they see one another, they are to exhort, admonish, encourage, so that each will remain steadfast and grow in love and in good works.

How these two ideas expressed by the participles are related to one another and to the main thought of the sentence may be shown by an example. A group of people, traveling in the open in a severe blizzard, realize that anyone leaving the group will be lost. They therefore remain together. If one of the group becomes tired, is benumbed by the cold, and feels that he must sit down and rest or even sleep, the others know they must not let him out of their sight. They will prod him, help him, speak encouragingly to him, reprimand him for his indifference, carry him, perhaps. In like manner we are "to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another."

The writer concludes the entire sentence with another factor that demands the heeding of the admonition. "And so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching." The Day is the great Day of Judgment, of which every day of tribulation, persecution, and judgment is a sign and reminder. Those events and items that would cause the readers of the Epistle to turn away from Christ and His redemption are signs of the approaching final Day and should rather cause them to be more faithful in doing the things mentioned. It is true the degree in which we keep our eyes fixed on that Day that is approaching, even though we know not the exact time of its appearance, will be the degree in which we will heed the admonition. We must remember that we are in the last times, the great Day of the Lord is drawing near.

This text is very appropriate for the first Sunday in Advent, the beginning of the new church year. It contains the gracious and glorious facts of our redemption in Christ and our position as priests before God, together with instructions as to our actions in the new church year. Any sermon on this text easily brings the comfort and the assurance of the Gospel and the admonitions connected with the Christian life. If we follow the outline of the text, we can use the theme: "How Can we Receive the Full Benefit of

Our Religion?" To this question the twofold answer is given: by taking to ourselves the word of assurance (vv. 19-21) and by heeding the admonitions (vv. 22-25). Matzner offers this outline: "'We Have Access to the Presence of God.' 1. There is a way to God—but it exists only in Christ. 2. The way leads to God—but we must use it. 3. The way has God's promises—but only for Christ's Church." This text presents the "Priesthood of Believers," and one may refer to the foundation of this priesthood (vv. 19-21) and to the exercise thereof (vv. 22-25). Furthermore, each of the exhortations may be placed in the foreground and made the focal point of the sermon. For example, on the basis of v. 25 the theme might be: "A Church Year of Concern for Others," and the motivation and the manifestation of such concern may be discussed. In every sermon on this text the priesthood of believers must be kept in mind and woven into the presentation.

LEWIS C. NIEMOELLER

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THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE "COMMON CONFESSION"

According to the *Northwestern Lutheran* (Sept. 9, 1951), the Joint Synod of Wisconsin at its convention made the *Common Confession* the sole topic of its doctrinal consideration. The first essay at the convention dealt with the *Common Confession's* statement on the *Word*. According to the report, the essayist, Prof. Roland Hoenecke, stated: "If the *Common Confession* is inadequate in its statement of the doctrine of inspiration, we could say that the *Common Confession* is simply unsatisfactory." The report continues: "He pointed out how the expression 'verbal inspiration' has not only been omitted from this confessional document, but also how the expressions used therein leave room for the old error which holds that the Scriptures as a whole and in a general way are inspired, but not word by word."

The Rev. E. H. Wendland examined the *Confession's* statement on *justification*. His conclusions are summarized as follows: "The *Brief Statement* holds that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ. Since the American Lutheran Church has up to the present day never taught an *objective justification* of God which applies to the whole world and which has been completed already through the death and resurrection of Christ, and since this church has therefore spoken only of a subjective justification which takes place when faith enters the heart, we must insist upon a confession which leaves room for no equivocation on this point."

The essay on *conversion* was presented by the Rev. T. R. Adaschek. The essayist said in part: "This doctrine has always been a point of sharp controversy between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church. The Synodical Conference has remained with the clear teaching of Scripture even though this leaves an unsolved mystery in the question as to why only some and not all are converted by God and saved. The other Lutheran church bodies in seeking a reasonable answer to this question have invented distinctions in man's innate ability to resist or to accept the grace of God before his conversion. The *Common Confession* is scripturally correct in what it says of man in the act of conversion itself, but says nothing about man's condition before his conversion, where the real controversy has always existed. Therefore the *Common Confession* is unacceptable not in what it says, but in what it omits."

Prof. Armin Schuetze was the essayist on the doctrine of *election*,

and the synopsis of his essay is given as follows: "In view of the seriousness of the division which existed for so many years, we must not merely be concerned with the question as to whether or not the statements of the *Common Confession* on this doctrine are scripturally correct, but we must ask, 'Does this article clearly settle the differences which came to light during the election controversy?' The old Ohio Synod taught that faith is a cause of man's election, not that God's election is the cause of faith, as Scripture teaches. In the *Common Confession*, however, nothing at all is said about the relationship of faith and election, but it merely describes those who have already been elected. Does God elect only those whom He foresaw as such who would not willfully resist the Gospel? This old and still prevalent error in the American Lutheran Church is not conclusively repudiated by the *Common Confession*. Thereby the certainty of our eternal election is placed in doubt."

The silence of the *Common Confession* on the controversies concerning the *Church and the Ministry* was described by Prof. E. E. Kowalke as a most serious deficiency. The report states: "Defining the *visible* side of the church as part of its essence, an old error of the American Lutheran Church is not disavowed by the *Common Confession*. Its ambiguous wording rather encourages this error. Unionism is repudiated by the *Common Confession*, but not clearly, as in the Brief Statement, and a Scripture passage used to encourage church fellowship is misapplied. Regarding the article on the 'Ministry' the same ignoring of past issues is again very much in evidence. While we maintain that the commission to preach the Gospel, to use the Means of Grace, and to exercise the Office of the Keys was given by Christ to all Christians, and that every believer is a priest of God, the old Iowa Synod taught that these gifts were bestowed upon the 'church at large,' and that the Office of the Keys belonged not to the individual, but to the Church 'in its totality.' To simply ignore this error is to leave room for the practice of establishing the clergy as an order with special rights that a congregation and an individual do not possess."

The Rev. Oscar Siegler, speaking on the *Last Things*, stated that the *Common Confession* fails to declare that the prophecies concerning the Antichrist have been fulfilled in the Papacy, and this disappointing lack of "clearness is quite in line with the old position of the American Lutheran Church that this doctrine of the Antichrist is open to various interpretations as far as the future is concerned."

The reporter in the *Northwestern Lutheran* concludes his report on

the Wisconsin Synod's action *re* the *Common Confession* as follows: "Six men on the basis of independent study came to the same conclusion: as a confessional statement which is supposed to constitute a settlement of controversies only existing up to the present day the *Common Confession* cannot stand on its own merits. Neither is it clear in its disavowal of old error. It is simply inadequate. The convention by unanimously adopting these essays showed that its congregations from all sections of the country, and all of its conferences and districts took the same stand."

We are submitting the official report of the Wisconsin Synod's action *re* the *Common Confession*, which reached us September 26, the final date of sending copy for the November issue of our journal to the publishers.

In its report to the convention the Standing Committee on Church Union stated the following: "When the Missouri Synod accepted the *Common Confession* at its 1950 Convention as a statement of the 'agreement that has been achieved in the doctrines treated by the two committees,' an additional resolution provided that its President place this matter before the Synodical Conference in order to secure the consent of the constituent synods. . . . It is in keeping with this procedure that our Synod must now declare itself on this matter.

"When similar documents of agreement were submitted twelve years ago, our Synod pointed to resolutions of the American Lutheran Church which made it clear that this body held different views on the requirements for church fellowship than those generally accepted in our Synodical Conference. Because of these differences even as to the premises for a God-pleasing union our Synod warned that under such conditions further negotiations would involve a denial of the truth and would cause confusion and disturbance in the Church. It asked that therefore further negotiations be suspended for the time being.

"The subsequent years have witnessed a progressive deterioration of this situation. Particularly in its relation to the National Lutheran Council the American Lutheran Church has been involved in a constant practice of unionism, and is still so involved. For many years this church has been, and still is, carrying on simultaneous negotiations in several directions which are quite opposite to each other. At the same time we have been compelled to note an increasing number of cases of unionism among the members of our sister synod. The 'Statement of the Forty-four' has given formal expression to this disturbing trend.

"Consequently the present document must, if anything, be stronger

than Missouri's union resolutions of 1938, both in its positive statement of doctrine, and also in the specific rejection of error, particularly since it is offered as the settlement of the controversies over which the respective church bodies have been divided in the past.

"We regret that we fail to find these qualities in the Document submitted to us. Our specific criticism is set forth in our committee's 'Review of the *Common Confession*,' which has been presented to our conferences and districts for their study.

"These matters have also been discussed with the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, the authorized representatives of the Missouri Synod. Meetings were held in Chicago January 15—16 and April 9—10, the discussion being based largely on our 'Review.' While the Missouri Committee took careful note of our objections, those discussions have to date brought nothing to light which would cause us to reverse our evaluation of the *Common Confession*.

"After careful consideration and mutual discussion we find ourselves constrained to report that in our judgment this Agreement involves an actual denial of the truth, since it claims to be a settlement of doctrinal differences which are not settled in fact."

The convention's Floor Committee submitted to the convention to ask our sister Synod to weigh carefully the following statements and resolutions:

1. "We have given the *Common Confession* prayerful and thorough study in our congregations, in all our conferences and all our Districts, and in our Convention.

2. "We have assured ourselves through an official and written statement, given by your [Missouri Synod's] Committee on Doctrinal Unity to our Standing Committee on Church Union, that the *Common Confession* is to be regarded, not as defining an area of doctrinal agreement, but as furnishing 'a settlement of those doctrinal controversies that were before the church up to the time of the adoption of the *Common Confession*.' (Minutes of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, April 10, 1951).

3. "We gladly acknowledge that the *Common Confession* contains many fine statements of Scriptural truth.

4. "We consider it to be no mere repetition, but a necessary emphasis to state here to you our motivation for our action on the *Common Confession*. It is a loving concern for the heart of the Gospel, the *Sola Gratia* (By Grace Alone) as already set forth in the preamble to the Review of the *Common Confession*. We are confident—and we have been so assured—that this is your concern likewise. We,

therefore, entertain the hope that you will see with us that only with the full Scriptural doctrine of Saving Grace Alone does God receive His full glory and the sinner his full security in Christ. We trust that you will also see that our criticism, especially regarding the lack of formal antitheses, is demanded for a full confession of the truth, so that neither God's glory nor the sinner's comfort be abridged."

The convention adopted the following resolutions:

1. "Be it resolved that we concur in the findings of the Standing Committee on Church Union as found in the document 'Review of the *Common Confession*,' and herewith make them our own.

2. "Be it further resolved that we inform The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that we not only find the *Common Confession* to be inadequate in the points noted (cf. Review of the *Common Confession*), but that we also hold the adoption of the *Common Confession* by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod involves an untruth and creates a basically untruthful situation. This action has been officially interpreted as a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled.

3. "And be it further resolved that we ask The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to repudiate its stand that the *Common Confession* is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees (Mo.—ALC).

4. "And be it further resolved:

a. "That we direct the attention to our sister Synod of Missouri to the position which the American Lutheran Church has taken in the Friendly Invitation of March 4, 1947, with the remark contending for 'an area where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching of the Word of God,' and that we indicate to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that this position of the American Church challenges the clarity and therefore the authority of the Scriptures. (Ps. 119:105.) This can only cause confusion and disturbance in the church. Therefore negotiations should be suspended.

b. "That we further indicate to the sister Synod of Missouri that not until the American Lutheran Church recognizes this as a basic problem which must first be considered and settled, will the obstacle to the renewal of doctrinal discussions have been removed. (Cf. *Convention Proceedings of the Joint Synod*, 1939, page 61, 2b. and 3.)"

* * *

The Thirty-Fourth Convention of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, August 21, 1951, Detroit, Mich., unanimously adopted the following resolution *re* the *Common Confession*.

"WHEREAS, The *Common Confession* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church has been placed before the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the purpose of securing the consent of our Church to the course of action of our sister Missouri Synod as outlined in its resolutions; and

"WHEREAS, Pursuant to this request, the *Common Confession* under the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the fear of God has been diligently studied by our Pastoral Conferences and discussed daily at the sessions of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in convention assembled; and

"WHEREAS, The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, on the basis of this thorough study has come to the conviction that the *Common Confession* does not contain anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church; and

"WHEREAS, The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church regards the *Common Confession* as sufficient basis for further negotiations with other Lutheran bodies toward the attainment of true unity of doctrine and practice; be it therefore

"Resolved, That the Slovak-Evangelical Lutheran Church express its agreement with the doctrines set forth in the *Common Confession* and grant its consent to the course of action as outlined in the resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Addenda to the resolution *re* the *Common Confession*

"Although the *Common Confession* has been adopted by unanimous vote of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, we hereby wish to bring to your attention a few pertinent observations which may help you in arriving at any clarification or expansion of the *Common Confession*.

"1. ARTICLE IV. ELECTION. The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church suggests that the words 'unto faith' be included in this Article and read: 'elected unto faith as His own. . . .'

"2. ARTICLE V. MEANS OF GRACE, Baptism. It is the opinion of the Convention that the words 'washing of' (first two words in third line) be eliminated.

"3. ARTICLE V. MEANS OF GRACE, The Lord's Supper. We also suggest that the words 'the most' be omitted and the article 'an' inserted to read: 'He enters into an intimate communion. . . .'

"4. ARTICLE VI. JUSTIFICATION. We furthermore offer the suggestion that the declaration of justification could be so phrased as

to make it more pronounced. And we also suggest the inclusion of the word 'merely' in the phrase 'the sinner *merely* accepts by faith.'

"5. ARTICLE VIII. SANCTIFICATION. It pleases us to inform you of the satisfaction expressed by many members who consider this Article to be an improvement on that in the *Brief Statement*.

"6. ARTICLE IX. THE CHURCH. This is the only Article which received a negative vote. Since the negative vote was so emphatic, the privilege was granted especially to all lay delegates voting against this Article to state their objections. It was thereby determined that the objections to this Article were not based on the doctrinal content, but solely and mainly on the use of the word 'catholic.' The objectors agreed to vote in favor of adopting this Article on the condition that this matter be brought to your attention and if at all possible the word 'catholic' be excluded.

"7. ARTICLE XII. THE LAST THINGS. Finally the Convention urges that the word 'still' be omitted. The sentence would then read: 'Among the signs of His approaching return for judgment the distinguishing features of the Antichrist, as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, are clearly discernable in the Roman papacy....'" F. E. M.

THOUGHTS FOR THANKSGIVING DAY

The pastor's message on Thanksgiving Day will more than likely center around two basic thoughts as he desires to help his parishioners to observe this national holiday in a God-pleasing manner: The wonderful gifts which we possess as American citizens and the obligations which these blessings place upon the American Lutheran Christian. One phase of these obligations is set forth in the following declaration:

A STATEMENT ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Since one of the disruptive forces which hinders the will of God is prejudice and discrimination in human relations, the *United Lutheran Church in America* sets forth the following propositions as the basis for study, discussion, experimentation, and concerted action by its congregations and members.

I. *Christian Principles*

The Word of God, which the Church proclaims, reveals the righteous judgment of God upon sinful man, and sets forth the distinctive power of Christ to redeem him.

1. *God the Father is the Creator of all mankind.* We are made in His likeness. In the light of the common creation of all men, differences in physical characteristics or social background are only of incidental importance.

2. *God condemns all injustice, all hatred, all abuse and persecution of men.* His judgment is revealed in the moral sickness of all men and in the torn fabric of our common life.

3. *God's atoning grace embraces every man.* Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God offers redemption to all. Christ died for all mankind. All men have equal worth in God's sight.

4. *Forgiveness through the Cross restores men to fellowship with God.* Through the remission of sins the way is opened to reconciliation between men. The love of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Cross, leads men to the deepest kind of human fellowship and mutual service. By the power of the Cross men can overcome prejudice, discrimination, and exploitation which sinfully distort God's order and are the basic cause of social tension.

5. *God calls all men through the Gospel to Christian brotherhood.* Love, which flows from God, seeks to create justice and true community. Love for one's fellowmen is the necessary counterpart of love for God. God calls men to serve Him by serving each other.

6. *In God's providence Christians, different in racial, geographical, economic, and social backgrounds, may use their differences to contribute to the total enrichment of life.* No group is self-sufficient. By the exercise of justice and brotherhood men may co-operate in building true human community.

7. *The abiding love of Christ, our Lord, impels us.* We dare not separate ourselves from that love. Christ is the one Word of God to whom we must listen and whom we must trust and obey in life and death. Thus Christians must face all human relationships in the spirit and power of Christ's love.

II. Human Rights and Responsibilities

In the light of these truths of Christian Faith the Church ought to help its people by offering a common witness to guide the individual conscience. Consistent Christian living requires that men shall seek to accord to each other the observance of the following rights and their matching responsibilities:

1. To possess and to respect the life and dignity of the human person as a child of God for whom Christ died.

2. To worship God without human distinctions in the Church, the body of Christ.

3. To develop the God-given talents through education and cultural pursuits in order to use these talents in answer to God's call.

4. To establish a home in living space and housing conducive to a wholesome family life.

5. To occupy the place in economic life for which he is individ-

ually fitted, being free to advance therein on the basis of character and ability.

6. To share the privilege and obligations of community life, having equal access to all public services, including those related to health, education, recreation, social welfare, and transportation, and receiving equal consideration from persons and institutions serving the public.

7. To exercise one's citizenship in elections and all the other processes of government, having freedom for inquiry, discussion, and peaceful assembly, and receiving police protection and equal consideration and justice in the courts.

III. *Propositions for Christian Action*

The foregoing declaration of Christian principles in the field of human relations and the enunciation of human rights and their attendant responsibilities derived therefrom, inevitably point toward Christian action. In working out the implications of our faith we face an awesome and urgent task in overcoming the evil tensions and injustices in human relations that obedience to God requires us to challenge. Christians ought to lay the following propositions to heart:

1. *Acknowledge Our Sin.*— Evil tensions and injustices resulting from racial and cultural practices must be faced before God. The unacknowledged sins of pride, fear, injustice, and hatred have added a great moral peril to our present situation. Men must learn in repentance to seek God's atoning grace and renewing Spirit so that society may attain its true basis in God's order.

2. *Accept Individual Responsibility.*— Each Christian must realize his moral responsibility to God for his actions affecting his neighbor. Each must examine his actions in the light of God's commands. Each must learn to show respect to all men as children of God and render justice to those with whom he deals. This obligation is crucial today in relation to members of minority groups.

3. *Begin in the Home.*— Our families must nurture their members in Christian life and outlook so that people of different backgrounds are respected and treated with equal fairness and good will. Parents must be on guard neither to pass on to their children the sins of prejudice, nor to lead them in discrimination which is unbecoming to Christians. Rather it is the duty of parents to lead their children, by precept and example, in interracial co-operation and understanding.

4. *Continue at Work.*— All of us have special responsibilities in our daily work and economic activities to strive for justice for our neighbor, fair employment opportunities for all, and the removal of those economic handicaps from which minorities suffer. Chris-

tians in labor unions, business organizations, and industrial enterprises should take the lead in working for justice for oppressed groups. Minorities likewise should seek to fulfill in their employment their responsibilities to their employers and fellow-workers, and to the groups affected by their work.

5. *Rally as Citizens.*— Christians have special responsibilities as citizens to make society's laws and practices conform to God's order. Many human rights in which Christians believe, especially rights as to personal safety, citizenship, education, employment, and housing, are not being extended to all men. Christian brotherhood is impeded by practices enforcing segregation. God calls for, and human justice requires, speedy changes at every level and in every area of our society.

Community self-surveys to determine the areas where basic rights are being denied, and what the opportunities for remedial action are, have proved useful. Fair Employment Practices laws have proved generally beneficial in cities and states where they have been enacted. Citizens' groups have secured fair use of educational funds, just action in the courts, and fairer treatment in press and radio for minorities. Christians should work for such constructive changes, and for public support of democratically enacted laws which conform to Christian standards.

6. *Arouse the Church.*— Since the Church is the Body of Christ, it must free itself from those cultural patterns of prejudice and discrimination which persist in our society and must manifest in its own life the principles and attitudes of Jesus.

The Church's agencies and institutions should seek to serve all people fairly without distinction because of racial or cultural background. All its congregations should be centers of action to develop Christian fellowship across human barriers, and to instil the spirit of equality and Christian brotherhood. (Reprinted from the *Lutheran Standard*.)

The Lutheran Church has always condemned the social gospel *in toto*, and it has done so for Scripturally valid reasons. The basic premise of the social gospel is the alleged inherent goodness of man and his supposedly native potentiality to reach moral and social perfection. Its kingdom is not spiritual, but an industrial, political, social, and economic utopia. W. Rauschenbusch, the most radical social gospeller, believed that the only means necessary to bring in this kingdom were a job and a piece of property. But the social gospel completely lacks a dynamic to establish its envisioned kingdom of righteousness and social justice. Lutheran theology knows that the mingling of the spiritual and the secular usually stems from, and always leads to, Calvinistic

legalism, and is therefore anxiously concerned to preserve the Scriptural and Lutheran distinction between the affairs which belong to the realm of the Law and those of the Gospel. Mindful of the Scriptural injunction that the Church's duty is first and last the preaching of the Gospel for the saving of immortal souls, some Lutherans may have gone too far at times and condemned every reference to the social obligations of believers in the Gospel as being the social gospel. The fact remains that the Church must always preach Law and Gospel. It must proclaim the Law, and that includes the Second Table, to bring men to a realization of the accursed character of man's inherent selfishness, which manifests itself not only in its hostile attitude toward God, but in its loveless conduct toward the neighbor. Man's sinful nature remains the same from generation to generation, but the manner in which his selfishness manifests itself varies constantly as the social structure undergoes changes. Thus, for example, Luther's exposition of the Ten Commandments in the Large Catechism is as up to date as in 1529 in so far as he applies the Law to man in general, but the specific applications in several instances have to be changed to meet the changed social conditions. The Church will likewise preach the Gospel, and that includes the truth that as a new creature the Christian is a totally free man for the glorious purpose that he may become the servant of all men (Gal. 6:10). The basic ethical injunctions of the New Testament are absolute invariables, but the specific applications must conform to our present economic and political social structure. It is from these viewpoints that the above Statement on Human Relations seems to us to be particularly timely and relevant.

F. E. M.

EDITION OF LOEHE'S COMPLETE WORKS PLANNED

The *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* reports that there is such a demand for Pfarrer Wilhelm Loehe's writings that a committee at Neuendettelsau in Mittelfranken is planning to publish a critical edition in seven volumes, with possible divisions into "Teilbaende." The undertaking does not stem from mere local patriotism, for Loehe's influence has reached far beyond the little *Bauernhof* with its dusty streets, its two imposing churches, its cemetery. Loehe was truly a versatile churchman. He was an organizer to whom American Lutheranism, the Missouri Synod in particular, owes immeasurably much; he was a champion of Lutheran confessionalism in an era of spiritual indifference; he was a theologian of first rank; an outstanding liturgist; a missionary whose holy zeal inflamed others, above all, the practical

pastor. Volumes I and II will contain his letters and diaries; Vol. III the writings dealing with his views on the Church and the congregation, undoubtedly including his *Drei Buecher von der Kirche*; Vol. IV his letters and publications concerning foreign and inner missions. We assume that the Indian mission in connection with the Franconian settlement and the establishment of the New Guinea mission will receive much space, as well as the diaconate, which as established by Loehe among the peasants of his congregation is absolutely unique. Vol. V will contain his writings in the interest of true Lutheranism and the two concluding volumes his sermonic and liturgical writings. Undoubtedly the works of such Loehe students as Dr. S. Hebart, now of Australia, and Pfarrer Kressel of Nuernberg will be fully utilized.

F. E. M.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

At the annual meeting of the Lutheran World Federation's executive committee in Geneva, the executive secretary of the organization, Dr. Sylvester C. Michelfelder, reported that the Federation now has fifty member churches in twenty-four countries. . . . Six church bodies, comprising more than 100,000 adherents, were accepted into membership: the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina (2,500); the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Japan (4,000); the Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Church of India (27,000); the Hungarian, Croatian, and Wendish Lutheran Churches of Yugoslavia (75,000). . . . It was reported that during the past decade more than \$47,000,000 in cash and goods have been contributed to overseas relief and reconstruction by Lutherans in America. In recent years other countries have also made substantial contributions to these activities. . . . It was the consensus of the executive committee that the time has come for the Federation as a whole, with all its member churches and national committees, to take responsibility for the continuing program, and plans to co-ordinate the relief activities of the Federation's member churches were approved by the meeting. They call for setting up a department of "Lutheran World Service" at LWF headquarters in Geneva which will be active in the fields of church reconstruction, interchurch aid, help for minority churches, and service to refugees. . . . In another action the committee approved a proposal for a permanent theological department headed by a director, this department also to be located at LWF headquarters, which occupies one of the buildings of the World Council of Churches. . . . One of the main objects of the department will be to organize an international exchange of theological professors and students and to help assure theological training for students of those churches which do not possess Lutheran faculties

of their own. . . . The department will also be charged with operating a publications center to promote the translation, publication, and distribution of theological literature among member churches of the Federation. . . . It was announced that one of the principal speakers at the second assembly of LWF, to be held at Hannover, Germany, July 25—August 3, 1952, will be Dr. Eivind Berggrav, former Bishop of Oslo and primate of the Church of Norway. He will speak at a plenary session on the subject "Church and State—the Lutheran Viewpoint." It was indicated that this topic will be brought up for discussion by the delegates. . . . Dr. S. C. Michelfelder succumbed to a heart attack on September 30 at Chicago. After attending a meeting in Curitiba, Brazil, S. A., he had come to Chicago to participate in the meetings of the Executive Committee of the National Lutheran Council. At the conclusion of these meetings the 62-year-old churchman was scheduled to speak in various American cities in the interest of Lutheran World Action. Since 1945 he had headquarters at Geneva, where he directed the NLC agency for bringing physical relief to the destitute of Europe as well as the Material Aids Division of the WCC. In the fall of the same year he was appointed executive secretary of the LWF and in recent months devoted much time to the planning of the Hannover meeting scheduled for next summer.

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A new stained-glass window in the chancel of Wollaston Lutheran Church in Quincy, Mass., shows a figure of Jesus preaching into a microphone, with a radio broadcasting tower in the background. The Rev. E. A. Kettner, pastor of the church, said: "The truth we are trying to portray is that He is still the living Christ and still teaches through His Church today."

* * *

The California and Pacific Synod of the ULCA has purchased property for a new theological seminary, the first for that church body west of the Rocky Mountains. Until now, the farthest west United Lutheran theological school has been Central Seminary, Fremont, Nebr. . . . Dr. J. L. Sawyer, president of the board of trustees of the new institution, announced the purchase of two adjoining estates, with a total of about five acres, in the Berkeley hills, overlooking San Francisco Bay, near the campus of the University of California, for the sum of \$144,500. . . . Much of the money to be invested in the new school was secured in the Christian Higher Education Year fund drive of the United Lutheran Church, now in its final months. . . . The new institution will be known as Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and will open in September, 1952.

Stewardship offices of the United Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church will hold a joint conference for the first time in 1952. The joint meeting was approved by the annual stewardship conference of the United Lutheran Church in Springfield, Ohio. The Rev. George Schultz, stewardship secretary of the American Lutheran Church, said: "Our programs of stewardship promotion have been so similar that it seems appropriate that we should meet together to share ideas and problems." Henry Endress, ULCA stewardship secretary and executive director of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement, said the joint conference marks the culmination of a trend in which the two groups have been using virtually the same methods in workshop planning, printed materials and films, and the training of pastors and laymen in stewardship. It was announced at the conference that the Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship will pay for the total stewardship program of the United Lutheran Church in America next year, as it did last year. The cost will be about \$150,000, said Harold U. Landis, Lebanon, Pa., businessman who is president of the laymen's Movement. He said the group is made up of men who each contribute from \$100 to \$1,000 annually to pay for the Church's stewardship promotion.

* * *

The Lutheran Church of Slovakia has been placed under Communist leadership with the appointment of Prof. Jan Chudoba as new senior Bishop of the Church. He replaces Bishop Vladimir Cobrda, who was dismissed recently and whose present whereabouts are unknown. Church sources in Vienna said that Bishop Cobrda had for a long time opposed the misuse of the Lutheran Church for political purposes. The announcement of Prof. Chudoba's appointment was made by *Lidove Noviny*, Czech Communist paper, which stated that he "was elected at a recent general convention of the Lutheran Church in Bratislava." Prof. Chudoba teaches at the new State-controlled Evangelical theological faculty in Bratislava. He is known as a leftist of long standing and a Communist Party member.

A second Lutheran bishop also has been eliminated from church leadership, it was learned. He is Bishop Fedor Ruppeldt of Bratislava, head of the Church's Western Diocese. There are only two bishops in the Slovak Lutheran Church. The General Inspector of the Church, Peter Zatko, has been replaced by a Communist. Church circles here expressed fear that a purge of prominent Slovak Lutheran clergy and laymen would follow the leadership changes.

The largest regional Catholic high school in the United States is being planned on Detroit's East Side. Architects are drawing plans for the school, which will be built on a 25-acre site and serve seven fast-growing parishes. Its cost unofficially is estimated at about \$2,500,000.

* * *

American Protestant churches will spend more than half a million dollars this year in their world-wide fight against leprosy, it was announced by Raymond P. Currier, executive secretary of American Leprosy Missions. Mr. Currier reported that the mission body voted a total of \$535,917 to be distributed among 148 leprosy colonies in 31 countries on five continents. American Leprosy Missions co-operates with 60 Protestant denominational and interdenominational mission boards in a program of medical, physical, and spiritual care of leprosy victims. More than \$300,000 of the total budget will be used to feed, clothe, and supply the necessary daily needs of resident patients and for salaries of missionary doctors and superintendents, Mr. Currier said. About 50,000 leprosy sufferers live in, or receive treatment from, the leprosy stations. Almost \$170,000 will be spent for new hospitals, churches, schools, dormitories, homes for healthy children, repairs, and farming equipment.

* * *

Hymns are "wonderful for calming crowds," a university psychology professor told 400 civil defense wardens in the congested downtown area of Manhattan. Prof. George B. Vetter of New York University urged the wardens to begin a familiar hymn to prevent panic among a crowd if an atomic attack starts. "It might be a good idea to practice a hymn these days so that you'll be prepared when the time comes," he said.

* * *

The Vatican radio reported that all Catholic priests between the ages of 22 and 55 are being called up for military service in Communist Hungary. The Vatican station also reported that "according to irrefutable proof" there are now 14,000,000 slave workers in Russia, among them 12-year-old children.

* * *

A leading Presbyterian layman, H. Roe Bartle of Kansas City, Mo., regional director of the Economic Stabilization Agency, speaking to the Wisconsin Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., criticized Presbyterian men who do not give 10 per cent of their time and 10 per cent of their money to the Church. . . . Many laymen, he

said, give more time to their Rotary club than to God. . . . He was especially critical of church members who do not support their pastors adequately. He said that the Presbyterian Church has a "lot of tightwad saints" among its elders and that pastors must earn enough to "hold their heads erect." Laymen and women should be nicer to pastors, their wives and children, he added, recalling that he lived through "hell on earth" because he was a Presbyterian preacher's child. —Need this be limited to Presbyterians?

* * *

Vienna reports that the Czech Parliament has passed a new law ordering the immediate dissolution of all religious, scientific, and cultural societies on the grounds that "they are non-progressive." . . . Interior Minister Vaclav Nosek told Parliament that "such pseudo-religious societies as Jehovah's Witnesses, the Salvation Army, and the International Bible Society have no place in our State." . . . Property belonging to these groups will be taken over by the State. Foreign representatives still remaining in Czechoslovakia are expected to receive orders to leave the country. . . . Mr. Nosek suggested that "members of the dissolved societies enlist as members of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Friendship Society or similar progressive organizations." . . . He said that the dissolved organizations "showed a negative attitude toward the people's democratic order."

* * *

The only member of the Roman College of Cardinals at liberty behind the Iron Curtain, Adam Stefan Cardinal Sapieha, Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, died after a long illness at the age of 84 years. (Joseph Cardinal Mindzenty, Primate of Hungary, is a prisoner behind the Iron Curtain, while Thomas Cardinal Tien, Archbishop of Peiping, has been exiled by the Chinese Communist government and now lives in the United States.) . . . The death of Cardinal Sapieha reduces the College of Cardinals to 49, or 21 below the full quota of 70 members. . . . At present there are 18 Italian cardinals, 5 French, 3 American, 2 German, 2 Spanish, 2 Argentine, 2 Brazilian, and one each of the following countries: England, Belgium, Portugal, Austria, Hungary, Syria, Armenia, Canada, Holland, Chile, Africa, Cuba, Peru, Australia, China.

* * *

Christian Science opposition has developed to proposed fluorination of Minneapolis city water, the contention being that the introduction of fluorine could mean medication of the water. . . . A communication handed to the City Council water works committee by Charles G.

Sharp of the Christian Science Committee on Publication for the State of Minnesota said: "As the representative of the Christian Science Church, I wish to point out to your committee, which is considering the placing of fluorine in the city water supply, that this is probably medication. If it is, Christian Scientists, of course, object to it because no exemption is possible for those who because of religious convictions do not use medicine. Furthermore, if this program is one of medication, it brings the State to the position of adopting State medicine." . . . For the first, the water works committee laid the matter of fluorination over for consideration by the newly elected City Council.—Of course, the principle of religious liberty will be invoked—which, it seems to us, is carrying that principle *usque ad absurdum*. And, after all, they need not use the city water, or they could move, perhaps, to a place where they do not even purify the water.

* * *

An illustration of the type of propaganda which is used by Communists against Catholic institutions comes from Wuhu in Anhwei, China, where Communist authorities had begun to lay plans to vilify the nuns in charge of an orphanage and turn the people against them. . . . The Communists built eighty small coffins and dug up the whole orphanage garden, looking for the bones of children "killed" in the institution; but all they found were the skeletons of five children who died during the war and which the nuns had to bury in their own garden. . . . Since the accusations had been made and the coffins bought, the Communists had to "save face"; accordingly, they filled the remaining seventy-five coffins with dirt and stuck a piece of bone in each. . . . However, when the people were forced to view the evidences of the nuns' "atrocities," they looked at each other blankly and asked: "But where are the skulls?"—Such incidents, by no means rare, give evidence of Communist fear and hatred of Christianity, but also, it seems to me, of a rather small-caliber mentality; the reader feels himself transported back to late medieval and Reformation times, viewing the activity of the Inquisition.

* * *

American Protestant mission boards have been served notice by the Chinese Communist government that they may no longer finance religious, educational, or charitable work in China. . . . A decree ordering the American bodies to cease their work immediately was signed in Peking by Premier Chou En-lai. The decree was embodied in a set of regulations obviously aimed at wiping out American influence and making the Chinese Church entirely independent. . . . Signaling the

official promulgation of a policy already in actual force for a long time, the decree made no mention of any missions but those conducted by Americans. . . . In addition to stipulating that the Chinese churches sever relations with mission boards in the United States, the decree provided for the early departure of the dwindling number of American missionaries who remain in China. It read in part: "Those who have spoken or acted against the people's government should be immediately dismissed, and those who have committed crimes should be reported to the government for punishment according to the law. Those who wish to leave should be given permission to return to their country. Those who have not spoken or acted against the people's government and are considered necessary to be left behind at the expense of Chinese institutions and organizations may remain. However, they may not take up executive or administrative offices in said institutions and organizations." . . . The decree said that foreign missions which wish to contribute their properties, not including land, to Chinese churches and organizations may do so, but only unconditionally. . . . In what seemed to be a desire to compensate for the loss of United States support, the decree provided for tax exemption on buildings owned by Chinese churches and church organizations.

* * *

According to an announcement over the Budapest Radio, a Roman Catholic Church in Communist Hungary is to be torn down to make room for a monument to Stalin. . . . The station said that Budapest municipal authorities had decided to erect the monument to Stalin on the site of the Church of Mary, Queen of Heaven, which was damaged during the last war, but not to such an extent that it could not be reconstructed, Hungarian refugees declare.

* * *

On September 15, Dr. Duke K. McCall, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, took over the presidency of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky., succeeding Dr. Ellis A. Fuller, who died last October.

* * *

Lay leaders of the Southeastern Methodist Jurisdiction, meeting in conference at Lake Junaluska, N.C., dealt with the Christian layman's position regarding the family, the community, and the world. Their views, expressed in three forum groups, were summarized in a statement prepared by J. C. Holler of Columbia, S.C. . . . "Modern advertising," so the statement read, "of liquor, beer, and such is trying

to break the home. . . . The apparent determination to break the influence of the home through advertising must be met by an equally strong determination on the part of laymen, not only to fight back, but also to uphold and strengthen the Christian home." Again, they declared, the home is being harmed by increasing breaking of the Sabbath; and Methodists are too prone to send their children to Sunday school instead of taking them. . . . They called for adequately disciplined, church-centered Christian homes and for strengthening of church colleges as bulwarks of youth training. . . . They declared that "we have probably overdone the attitude of tolerance—tolerance to evil in the community. We must become more concerned about righteousness rather than respectability." . . . "Too many laymen suffer from religious laryngitis when they should be speaking out on moral issues. The time has come for Christian men to stand up and be counted on moral, political, and other issues affecting the life of the community." . . . Concerning their relations with the world as a whole, the laymen voiced a need "to know more about missions and be more concerned about changing men everywhere Godward." . . . They praised the work of church women in this regard and called on the men "to do as effective a job as women."

* * *

Japan's first privately owned radio station will begin broadcasting this fall under the sponsorship of a Roman Catholic religious order, the Pious Society of St. Paul. The managing director of the station, the Italian-born priest John Chiesa, said the main purpose of the radio station will be "to fight the Communistic program which is attempting to infiltrate Japan." . . . The station will use the call letters BHK, which stand for Cultural Radio Station in the Japanese language. He added that in the "not too distant future" he looked forward also to setting up a television station.

* * *

Protestants, "Stop, Look, Listen"! — From Chautauqua, N. Y., comes the report that James G. McDonald, former American ambassador to Israel, advocated establishment of full diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican. He was speaking on another topic, but departed from the theme of his lecture on the Middle East to insert the remark that while Myron Taylor "did a fine job as personal representative of the President" at the Vatican, he "would have done a better job if he had been an ambassador." . . . The former diplomat declared: "The Vatican is one of the best listening posts in the West, and we should be officially represented there as are most of the rest

of the countries of the world." . . . Myron Taylor, in the first week in August, reported to the President on his recent tour which included an audience with Pope Pius XII. — At this distance this report looks to us like another trial balloon: Are Protestants still alert, or have they forgotten?

* * *

The president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Mrs. D. Leigh Calvin, at a convention in Boston, stated that Americans now spend a million dollars an hour for beer, wine, and liquor. The 1950 expenditure for alcoholic beverages totaled \$8,760,000,000, or \$210,000,000 more than in 1949. — Without sanctioning all the radicalism of the WCTU, we see that these figures give occasion for thought.

* * *

Bishop Daniel J. Gerecke of Tucson, Ariz., in an order effective October 5, revoked the privilege enjoyed by Arizona Roman Catholics of eating meat on Fridays. A similar decree was issued previously by the archdiocese of Santa Fe, N. Mex. . . . Both Arizona and New Mexico are former Spanish-controlled territories where Catholics retained the privilege of eating meat on Fridays originally granted to Spain and all her dominions under papal bulls dating back to the reign of Pope Urban II (1088—99). The dispensation was granted in recognition of Spain's role in preventing the Moors from overrunning Europe. . . . These orders are in line with a decree by Pope Pius XII aimed at making abstinence from meat on Fridays uniform throughout the Catholic world. — Another instance proving that papal rule is autocratic, totalitarian!

* * *

London reports that upwards of 35,000 delegates from 40 countries attended the five-day international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held in the Wembley Stadium in that city. It was the first time that the Witnesses — the official name of the organization is the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society — met in London. . . . During the sessions, 2,225,000 leaflets and thousands of window placards, posters, and streamers were used in an intensive publicity campaign, which also featured house-to-house visits. 3,000 Witnesses, ranging in age from ten to 86 years, were immersed in a public pool some miles west of London. . . . The president of the society delivered an address on the subject: "Will Religion Meet the World Crisis?" It contained sharp attacks on leaders of Christian groups who "look for political rulers and economic planners, backed by military might, material wealth, and industrial organization, to point out the way. They depend on bullets more than on Bibles, on bombing missions more than on

Gospel-preaching missions. Everybody knows they are fearfully concerned for the life of political nations with which their own fate is bound up and are following the lead of political, economic, and military bosses. . . . Christ abstained from meddling in the politics of imperial Rome; we must brush aside the religious traditions of men and go directly to the Bible."—The teachings of this sect, and particularly their use of the Bible and the Gospel, as we all know, give room for much criticism, since they depart far from the teaching of our Master; but their strictures of Protestant aims and methods may well move us to pause and consider, and lead to an earnest examination whether we in any way are giving the world cause to blaspheme.

* * *

Damage estimated at between \$200,000 and \$300,000 was suffered in a fire at the Lutheran-owned Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives in Jordan Jerusalem, but the 24-hour blaze was largely confined to supplies stored in the basement. . . . The 400-bed institution, one of the largest hospitals in the Middle East, belongs to the Lutheran World Federation and is operated by the church agency for Arab Palestinian refugees under an agreement with the United Nations.

* * *

A Vatican Radio broadcast reported that Hungarian Communist authorities are preparing to distribute a "Communist version of the Bible." The broadcast said "millions of copies" of the Communist "Bible" have been printed in many languages for distribution not only in Hungary, but throughout the world.

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A "leave-the-churches" movement has been launched in Braunschweig, Germany, by the Association of German Freethinkers. The campaign was approved at a general meeting of the Association, which was reformed recently after having lapsed during the war. . . . Declaring that there is a "growing revival" of the freethinkers' movement in Germany, Heinrich Graul, the Association's chairman, said a strong and united freethinkers' organization must be built up "to check the reactionary churches, which use religion to make political business." . . . The conference agreed that the Association's fight in the public field should be directed particularly against "the churches' attempts to dominate the schools."—Communist practice follows that of Hitler: Take control of the youth—then never mind what the old folks say or do!

THEO. HOYER

BOOK REVIEW

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

THE LORD'S PRAYER. Its Character, Purpose and Interpretation. By E. F. Scott. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1951. 5¾×8¼, vii and 127 pages. \$2.25.

A former professor of Biblical theology at Union Theological Seminary herewith presents a little book by which he desires to make men think when they pray the Lord's Prayer. "His object was to frame a prayer which did not consist of formal words but which would compel men to think of what they said. For this reason it is composed of short sentences with pauses between them in which the mind might react on the words spoken." (P.vi.) A number of emphases in the volume are helpful: the Lord's Prayer is a list of the simplest and primary needs of man (p.74); the Lord's Prayer reveals a background of Jewish thought and language, but completely transcends any parallel; it is "not a series of petitions but a single prayer, all springing naturally out of the same root" (p.61). Some shortcomings strike this reviewer: the Spirit that accompanies the prayer of the Christian is an "inner glow" (p.67); the Kingdom is not defined accurately, although the author points out that it is already here and yet at the same time is the object of the Christian hope (p.92); the prayer for daily bread is discussed chiefly from the point of view of what we pray for, rather than the attitude of trust and dependence which we are praying for; and the relation of the praying Christian to the Father by means of Jesus Christ and His redemption is not discussed and those attitudes of prayer are substituted which are common to men of any faith (the closest forthright statement is on p.124). These strictures do not negate the fact that Dr. Scott's book is highly stimulating and succeeds in its purpose, namely, to make us think the Lord's Prayer through.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

A FRESH APPROACH TO THE NEW TESTAMENT. By H. G. G. Herklotz. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York. 176 pages, 8×6. \$2.00.

The author of this book seeks to clarify and defend the thesis that to understand the New Testament one must consider the missionaries themselves, their message and the field in which it was proclaimed, the rival faiths with which they had to contend, and the factors in the message and in the life produced by it which made the missionary movement of the early Christian missionaries so very successful. The key to the understanding of the New Testament documents, according to his view, is that they are propagandist literature of a widespread and successful missionary

movement (p. 15). While there are many elements of fact in the writer's thesis, it is difficult to agree with him that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were written for the church in Rome shortly after the Neronian persecution in A. D. 64 and that Mark's Gospel was composed much later, perhaps as late as A. D. 130. This "fresh approach" will find little scholarly support; it is true also that the author's too narrow premise leaves out of consideration the principal factor that must be considered in the study of the New Testament, namely, the divine impulse and guidance which made the Apostles inspired messengers of Christ both to establish the Christian Church and to give it its divinely inspired Bible (cp. Eph. 2:20).

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

THE TABERNACLE, PRIESTHOOD, AND OFFERINGS. By Rev. I. M. Halde-
man. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 408 pages, 8×6. \$3.00.

The reviewer was deeply impressed with the unflinching faith and deep piety of the author of this book, pastor of First Baptist Church, New York, N. Y., and author of a number of books on Bible study. In the Old Testament tabernacle, priesthood, and offerings he everywhere sees types of Christ, "Real Man and Very God," each type of symbol "being occupied not with an ethical, but only and always with a sacrificial Christ." In thirty-eight chapters he demonstrates in detail how the Levitical priesthood and worship foreshadowed Jesus, the Antitype of the entire Old Testament symbolism. To prove his point, he quotes the New Testament, often with great force and fitness. Occasionally, the reviewer believes, his applications go too far, and now and then his Calvinistic prejudice leads him to misinterpret Scripture. He thus states that, before the resurrection of Christ, the Holy Spirit, while dwelling in the believers, never abode in them as a continued guest, so that David could cry: "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (Ps. 51:11). But after Christ's resurrection the Holy Spirit will never leave the child of God nor be taken away from the genuine believer, so that no child of God, taught of the Lord, can offer that prayer today. Believers may grieve Him; they may resist Him; they may quench Him as a flame of fire in the soul, but He is never taken out of them (p. 407 f.). This is the old Calvinistic error that while the believer may lose the exercise of faith, he can never lose faith itself.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

THE MAIN TRAITS OF CALVIN'S THEOLOGY. By Bela Vasady. Wm. B.
Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 43 pages, 9×6.
\$1.00.

For many years Dr. Vasady was a leading figure in the Reformed Church of Hungary, where he served as professor of Reformed theology at the University of Debrecen, as president of the theological department of the 400-year-old Reformed College of that city, and as secretary of the Hungarian Ecumenical Council. He came to America in 1946 as visiting professor to Princeton Seminary, McCormick Seminary in Chicago, and

Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., lecturing on "The Theology of the *Institutes*." This volume is a revised rendering of the original text written in the Magyar language. To the American reader it may appear as rather strange both in its approach and its technique, since it is decidedly European. The author concerns himself with the basic aspects of Calvin's theology, which he calls "Belief-ful Pragmatism"; "Belief-ful Realism"; "Belief-ful Totalitarianism"; "Belief-ful Antinomism." Organically and reciprocally these are interrelated, but it is "belief-ful" totalitarianism which supplies the dominant note. Through prayer, which is distinctly totalitarian in nature, these different underlying beliefs come into organic expression and assume a rightful position to God's sovereignty. Dr. Vasady writes: "Never since St. Paul has anyone given voice in a more classical manner to the unconditional demands of belief-ful totalitarianism than did the humble servant of the Lord, John Calvin." Though somewhat queer in expression and presentation, the book makes interesting and instructive reading. Against modern "Kultur-Protestantismus" and humanistic liberalism it offers orthodox Calvinism as the corrective of present-day theological drifting. It is understood, of course, that the author uses the terms "Pragmatism," "Agnosticism," and others in a sense peculiar to his theological belief.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

DEMOCRACY AND THE QUAKER METHOD. By Francis E. Pollard, Beatrice E. Pollard, and Robert S. W. Pollard. Philosophical Library, New York, 1950. 5×7½, 160 pages. \$3.00.

Three British Quakers collaborate in a little book which contains a number of technical chapters of interest to the church historian, including "a number of recorded discussions on highly controversial subjects which have taken place in the Society of Friends." These are set forth as cases illustrative of the "Quaker Method" of discussion, and a major chapter proposes to provide the "application of Quaker methods to other bodies" (pp. 71—98). To oversimplify, the "Quaker method" involves a method of discussion which dispenses with voting and majority decisions and arrives at a concerted judgment or "united decision" after a process of communication and clarification. In America the chief illustration of this method has been the State Department's Committee on Atomic Energy and its procedures under David Lilienthal. The application of this method to the work of the church, both to administration and to doctrinal controversy, seems almost mandatory.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

THE DAGGER AND THE CROSS. An Examination of Christian Pacifism. By Culbert G. Rutenber. Fellowship Publications, 21 Audubon Ave., New York 32, N. Y., c. 1950. 5½×8, 134 pages. \$1.00.

The professor of the philosophy of religion at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary herewith presents an acute study of pacifism as it seeks to buttress itself on Christian premises. He seems to advocate not simply

quietism, but a vigorous attack upon the sources of war. From the point of view of Lutheran theology his utilization of Romans 13 is insufficient, in fact, it is negligible. Thus the relating of love to the activities of government is likewise undermined. This is not to slur Professor Rutenber's discussion as a whole, which is rich in its documentations and thoughtful in the extreme. The basic question still remains: Does the sword of Romans 13 involve functions of war and therefore activities which Christian love will support?

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

EVANGELISCH-LUTHERISCHE KIRCHENZEITUNG, published biweekly by Lutherisches Verlaghaus, Berlin-Spandau, Evang. Johannestift. Quarterly, D. M. 5:10. Order from publisher.

We have read this Lutheran publication for several years and consider it one of the best theological periodicals appearing in Germany today. Dr. Ernst Kinder of the Augustana Hochschule in Neuendettelsau is the editor. Dr. Kinder only recently completed a survey of American Lutheran seminaries. In its August 31 issue the *Kirchenzeitung* offers the following articles and notes: Der Katechumenat der Kirche; Geschichte und Eigenart der ev.-luth. Landeskirche Hannovers; Fragen des geistlichen Amtes im Lichte der Prophetie Jeremias; Nachrichten und Bucherrezensionen. Each issue contains sixteen pages in a format slightly larger than the *Lutheran Witness*.

F. E. MAYER

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

CONCORDIA BIBLE STUDENT, Vol. XLI, No. 1, October-December, 1951.
"The Life of the Apostle Peter." 65 cents per annum.

CONCORDIA BIBLE TEACHER, Vol. XIII, No. 1, October-December, 1951.
"The Life of the Apostle Peter." \$1.00 per annum.

Edited by Rev. John M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D., under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, Tract No. 182. By H. G. Brueggemann. 30 pages. 10 cents postpaid.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS. An Interpretive Paraphrase. By E. M. Plass. 4½×6, 31 pages. 10 cents each.

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